The Dynasts.

Part First.

[The MS. from which the book was printed]

The Dynasts

A Drama of the Napoleonic Wars

in

Three Parts, Nineteen Acts, and One Hundred and Thirty Scenes.

by

Thomas Hardy.

Part First.

"And I heard sounds of insult, shame, and wrong,
And trumpets blown for wars."

Preface.

The Drama here presented is concerned with the Great Historical Calamity, or Clash of Peoples, ~~that was~~ artificially brought about some hundred years ago.

The choice of such a subject was mainly due ~~owing~~ to three accidents of locality. It chanced that the writer was familiar with a part of England that lay within hail of the watering-place in which King George the Third had his favourite & frequent residence during the war with the first Napoléon, & where he was visited by ministers & others who bore the weight of English affairs on their more or less competent shoulders at that stressful time. Secondly, this district, being also near the coast which had echoed more often with rumours of invasion than, perhaps, any other part of England, was formerly animated by memories & traditions of the military doings incidental to preparations for that contingency. Thirdly, the same countryside happened to include the village which was the birthplace of Nelson's flag-captain at Trafalgar.

When, as the first published result of these accidents ~~influences~~, "The Trumpet-Major" was printed, more than twenty years ago, I found myself in the tantalizing position of having touched the fringe of a vast international tragedy without being able, through limits of plan, knowledge, & opportunity, to enter further ~~thus~~ into its events; a restriction ~~condition of things~~ that prevailed ~~till, or~~ for many years. But the provokingly slight regard paid to English influence & action throughout the struggle by Continental writers who had dealt imagin-

ative[ly] with Napoléon's career seemed always to demand a new handling of the theme by some Englishman, apart from that of the historians, which should re-embody the features of this influence in their true proportion; and accordingly on a belated day about six years back, the following play was outlined.

It may, I think, claim at least a humble fidelity to the facts

[N]OTE

This volume has a very [ti]ght binding and while every [ef]fort has been made to reproduce the centres, force would result in damage

[Foot note] * It is intended to give a list of the chief authorities at the end of the Third Part.

atively with Napoléon's career seemed always to demand a new handling of the theme by some Englishman, apart from that of the historians, which should re-embody the features of this influence in their true proportion; and accordingly on a belated day about six years back, the following play was outlined.

It may, I think, claim at least a humble fidelity to the facts of its date as they are given in ordinary records. Whenever any evidence of the words really spoken by the characters in their various situations was attainable, as close a paraphrase as was compatible with the form chosen has been aimed at ~~has been attempted~~. And in all cases outside oral tradition, accessible scenery, & existing relics, my indebtedness for detail to the abundant pages of the historian, the biographer, & the journalist, English & foreign, has been, of course, continuous.*

It was thought ~~desirable~~ proper to introduce, as super-natural spectators of the terrestrial drama, certain impersonated abstractions, or Intelligences, called for brevity Spirits. They are intended to be taken by the reader for what they may be worth as contrivances of the fancy merely. Their doctrines are advanced with no eye to a systematized philosophy warranted to lift "the burthen of the mystery" of this unintelligible world. The utmost hoped is that they & their ~~speeches~~ utterances may have dramatic plausibility enough to procure for them, in the words of Coleridge, "that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment which constitutes poetic faith". ~~In respect of their character~~ The wide prevalence of the Monistic theory of the

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Universe forbade, in this twentieth century, the importation of Divine personages from any ~~old~~ antique Mythology as ready-made sources or channels of Causation, even in verse, & excluded the ~~celestial beings~~ supernal machinery of, say, Paradise Lost, as peremptorily as that of the Iliad or the Eddas. And the abandonment of the masculine pronoun in ~~speaking of the~~ allusions to the ~~[illegible]~~ First or Fundamental Spring of things, seemed a necessary & logical consequence of the general abandonment by thinkers of the anthropomorphic conception of the same.

Nevertheless the phantasmal ~~Abstractions~~ Intelligences here delineated will, without much forcing, be found to lend themselves as readily to the Predestinarianism of the Theologian as to the Determinism of the Scientist, should any gentle reader so require. As already stated, the writer has no dogma herein either to enforce or to deny. These ~~Abstractions~~ Intelligences are divided into groups of which one only — that of the Pities — represents, in the old definition, "the Universal Sympathy of human nature — the spectator idealized" * of the Greek Chorus; the remainder being eclectically chosen auxiliaries that were suggested by the foregoing conclusions. But misgivings that the achievement in this feature of the drama may falls far below the original hope & intention have sadly to be confessed.

[foot note] * Schlegel.

¶ It may hardly be necessary to ~~remind~~ inform readers that in devising this chronicle-piece no attempt has been made to create that completely organic structure of action, & closely webbed development of character & motive, which are rightly expected of a drama strictly self-contained. A panoramic show like the present is a series of historical "ordinates" (to use an expression in geometry): the subject is familiar to all; & fore-knowledge is assumed to fill in the curves ~~that are~~ required to combine the whole gaunt framework into an artistic unity. The spectator, in ~~fact~~ thought, becomes a performer whenever called upon, & cheerfully makes himself the utility-man of the gaps. Should he refuse to do this, a ~~&~~ historical ~~panorama-play~~ presentment on an intermittent plan, in which the dramatis personae number some hundreds, exclusive of crowds & armies, becomes in his individual case ~~a failure~~ unsuitable.

Readers will readily discern, too, that "The Dynasts" is a play intended simply for mental performance, ~~mainly~~, & not for the stage. Some critics have averred that to declare a drama as being not for the stage is to make an announcement whose subject & predicate cancel each other. The question seems to be an unimportant matter of terminology. Compos-itions cast in this shape were, without doubt, originally written for the stage only, & as a consequence their nomenclature of "Act," "Scene," & the like, was drawn directly ~~framed~~ from the vehicle

of representation. But in the course of time such a shape would be recognized as ~~discovered to be~~ an eminently readable one; moreover, by dispensing with the theatre altogether, a freedom of treatment was attainable in this form that was denied where the material ~~practical~~ possibilities of stagery had to be rigorously remembered. With the careless irrelevancy of human speech, ~~or~~ the technicalities of practical mumming were retained in these productions when they had ceased to be concerned with the stage at all.

To say, then, in the present case, that a writing in play-shape is not to be played, is merely another way of stating that such writing has been cast in a form for which there chances to be no brief definition save one ~~that~~ already in use for works that it superficially but not entirely resembles.

Whether mental performance alone may not eventually be the fate of all drama ~~[illegible]~~ other than that of contemporary or frivolous life, is a kindred question not without interest. ~~which cannot be discussed here~~. The mind naturally flies to the triumphs of the Hellenic & Elizabethan theatre in exhibiting scenes laid "far in the Unapparent", & asks why they should not be repeated. But the meditative world is older, more invidious, more nervous, more quizzical, than it once ~~was~~ was, & being unhappily perplexed by

"Riddles of Death Thebes never knew",

may be ~~feel~~ less ready & less able than Hellas & old England were to look through the insistent, & often grotesque, substance at the thing symbolized.

A practicable compromise may conceivably result, taking the shape of a monotonic delivery of speeches, with dreamy conventional gestures, something in the manner ~~of the bygone~~ traditionally maintained by the olden Christmas mummers, the curiously hypnotizing impressiveness of whose automatic style — that of persons who spoke by no will of their own — will be remembered by all who ever witnessed it. Gauzes or screens to blur outlines might still further shut off the actual. But this branch of the subject cannot be ~~discussed~~ carried further here.

T. H.

September: 1903.

The Dynasts.

Part First.

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Characters of Part First.

I. Phantom Intelligences.

{ The Ancient Spirit of the Years.
  Chorus of the Years.

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  Chorus of the Pities.

{ Spirits Sinister & Ironic.
  Choruses of Sinister & Ironic spirits.

The Spirit of the Earth.

Minor Spirits.

Spirit Messengers.

Recording Angels.

II. Persons of the Drama.

The names printed in italics are those of walking figures only. [underlined red]

George the Third
The Duke of Cumberland.
Pitt
Fox
Sheridan.
Windham
Whitbread
Tierney, Bathurst & Fuller
Lord Chancellor Eldon.
Earl of Malmesbury
Lord Mulgrave.
Lord Grenville.
Count Munster.
Viscount Castlereagh.
Viscount Sidmouth.
Another Noble Lord.

Rose.
Canning.
Perceval.
Grey.
Speaker Abbot.
Tomline Bishop of Lincoln
Sir Walter Farquhar
Another Cabinet Minister
Other Peers, ministers, ex-Ministers, Members of Parliament & Persons of Quality.

Nelson.
Collingwood.

Hardy
Secretary Scott
Dr Beatty
Dr Magrath
Burke, Purser.
Lieutenant Pasco
Another Lieutenant
Pollard, a midshipman
Another midshipman
Captain Adair
Lieutenants Ram & Whipple
Other English naval officers
Dr. Alexander Scott
Sergeant-major Secker & marines
Staff & other officers of the English army.
A company of Soldiers
Regiments of the English army & Hanoverian.
Sailors & boatmen
A militiaman.
Naval crews.

Wiltshire, a country gentleman
~~[illegible]~~

The Lord Mayor & Corporation of London.
A gentleman of fashion
A horseman.
Two beacon-watchers
English citizens & burgesses, Highway-passengers, Coach & other messengers, & servants & rustics

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Napoléon Bonaparte.
Decrès.
Daru.
Monge, a philosopher.
Berthier
Murat
Soult.
Ney.
Lannes.
Bernadotte
Marmont.
Dupont.
Oudinot.
Davoust
Vandamme.

Other French marshals.

A minor officer.

Villeneuve

Lauriston

Flag-Captain Majendie

Lieutenant Daudignon.

Lieutenant Fournier

~~Lieutenant~~ de Prigny, Head of staff

Captain Lucas.

Other French naval officers & petty officers.

~~Couriers~~

~~Heralds~~.

Seamen of the French & Spanish navies.

Regiments of the French army.

Couriers

Heralds

Aides, ~~clergy~~ officials, pages. &c.

Attendants.

French ~~& Italian~~ citizens.

Cardinal Caprara.

Priests, Acolyths, & Choristers.

Italian Doctors & Presidents of Institutions.

Milanese citizens.

The Emperor Francis.

The Emperor Alexander.

The Archduke Ferdinand.

Prince John of Lichtenstein

Prince Schwarzenberg

Mack

Jellachich

Riesc

Weirother

Another Austrian General.

Two Austrian officers.

Prince Kutúzof

Count Langeron

Count Buxhóvden

Count Milorádovich

Dokhtorof.

Giulay, Gottesheim, Klenau & Prschebiszewsky.

Regiments of the Austrian Army.

Regiments of the Russian Army.

Queen Charlotte.

English Princesses.

Ladies of the English Court.

Lady Hester Stanhope

Lady Caroline Lamb, Mrs Damer &

A Lady.

Other English Ladies.

The Empress Joséphine

Princesses & Ladies of Joséphine's Court. ¶ Seven Milanese young Ladies.

~~A~~ Townswomen.

Countrywomen.

A Militiaman's wife.

A streetwoman.

Shipwomen.

Servants.

Forescene.

The Overworld S..

Enter the Spirit & Chorus of the Years, the Spirit & Chorus of the Pities, the Spirit of the Earth, the Spirits Sinister & Ironic with their Choruses ~~Chorus of Sinister Spirits~~, minor spirits, spirit-messengers, & Recording Angels.

Spirit of the Earth

What of the Immanent Will & Its designs?

Spirit of the Years.

It works unconsciously, as heretofore,
Eternal artistries in Circumstance,
Whose patterns, planned by rapt aesthetic rote,
Seem in themselves Its single listless aim,
And not their consequence.

Chorus of the Pities (aerial music.)

Still thus? Still thus? ~~Still thus~~?
ever ~~For aye~~ unconscious!
An automatic sense ¶ Unweeting why or whence?
Then be the inevitable, as of old,
Although that so it be we dare not hold!

Spirit of the Years.

Hold what you ~~will~~ list, fond unbelieving Sprites,
~~I will not affect~~ It cannot ~~still~~ change the pulsion of the Byss,
Which thinking ~~out~~ on, yet knowing not Its thought,
Unchecks Its clock-like laws.

Spirit Sinister

Good, as before.
My little engines, then, will still have play.

Spirit of the Pities

Why doth It so & so, & ever so,
This ageless, mighty, ~~thinking~~ brooding, nescient Thing?

Spirit of the Years

~~Because (as some have said)~~ As one ~~quaint~~ sad story runs, It lends Its heed
To other worlds, being wearied out with this;
Wherefore Its mindlessness of earthly ~~things~~ woes.
Some, too, have ~~said~~ told at whiles that rightfully
Its warefulness, Its care, this planet lost
When in her early growth & crudity
By bad mad acts of severance men contrived,
Working such nescience by their own device.—

At least, so stands it in some chronicles,
Though not in mine.

Spirit of the Pities

Meet is it, none the less
To bear in thought that though Its consciousness
May be estranged, engrossed afar, or tranced,
Sublunar shocks may wake Its heed anon?

Spirit of the Years

Nay. In the Hind-time, even to the germ of Being,
Nothing appears of shape to indicate
That ~~eyes~~ heart attent has marshalled things terrene,
Or will (such is my thinking) in my span.
Rather they show that, like a knitter drowsed,
Whose fingers play in skilled unmindfulness,
The Will has woven with an absent heed
Since life first was; & ever will so weave.

Spirit Sinister

And we've rare dramas as a consequence!

Spirit of the Years

Well, no more thus on what no mind can mete.
Our scope is but to register & watch
By means of this great gift accorded us —

The free location of our entities.

Spirit of the Pities

On things terrene, then, I would say that though
The human news wherewith by now thou stirr'dst me
May please thy temper, Years, 'twere better far
Such deeds were nulled, & this strange man's career
Wound up, as making inharmonious jars
In her creation whose bright wraith we know.
The more that he, turned man of mere traditions,
Now profits naught. For the large potencies
Instilled into his idiosyncrasy —
To throne fair Liberty in Privilege' room —
Are taking taint, & sink to common plots
For his own gain.

Spirit of the Earth

And who, then, Cordial One,
Wouldst substitute for this Intractable?

Chorus of the Pities (aerial music)

We would establish those of kindlier build,
In fair Compassions skilled,
Men of deep art in life-development;
Watchers & warders of thy varied lands,

Men surfeited of laying heavy hands
upon the innocent,
The mild, the fragile, the obscure content
Among the myriads of thy family.
Those, too, who love the true, the excellent,
And make their daily deeds a melody.

Spirit of the Earth.
They may come, will they. I am not averse.
Yet know I am but the ineffectual Shade
Of her the Travailler, herself a thrall
To It; in all her labourings curbed & ruled!

Spirit of the Years.
Shall such be mooted now? Already change
Hath played strange pranks since first I brooded here.
But old Laws operate yet; & phase & phase
Of men's dynastic & imperial moils
Shape on accustomed lines. Though, as for me,
I care not how they shape, or what they be.

Spirit of the Pities
You seem to have no sense of mercy, Sire?

Spirit of the Years.
Mercy? What is it? What are grief & grame?

What designate you ~~names~~ titles of Good & Ill?—
'Tis not in me to feel with, or against,
These flesh-hinged mannikins Its hand upwinds
To click-clack off Its fore-adjusted laws;
But only through my centuries to behold
Their aspects, & their movements, & their moods.

R Johnston R King

Spirit of the Pities.

They are shapes that bleed, mere marionettes or no,
And each has parcel in the total Will,
Which overrides them ~~but~~ as a whole its parts
In other entities.

Spirit Sinister (aside)

Limbs of Itself:
Each one a jot of It in quaint disguise?
I'll fear all men henceforward!

Spirit of the ~~Years~~ Pities

Go to. Let this terrestrial tragedy—

Spirit ~~Sinister~~ Ironic.

Nay, comedy—

Spirit of the ~~Years~~ Pities

Let this earth-tragedy

Whereof ye spake, afford a spectacle
Conned closelier by ~~[illegible]~~ [you] than your custom is. —

white line →

How does it stand? [Spirit of the Years.] (to a Recording Angel.)

Open & voice the page
Thou'st lately writ, that sums these happenings,
~~And [illegible] to keep the~~ [In brief reminder of their] instant points ~~thereof~~
Slighted by ~~[illegible]~~ [us] amid our converse here.

Recording Angel (from a book, in recitative.)

Now mellow-eyed Peace is made captive,
And Vengeance is chartered
To deal forth its ~~will~~ [dooms] on the Peoples
With sword & with spear.

Men's musings are busy with forecasts
Of clangours & battle,
And visions of shock & disaster
Rise red on the year.

The easternmost ruler sits wistful,
And tense he to midward;
The King to the west mans his borders
In front & in rear.

While one they eye, flushed from his crowning,
Ranks legions around him

To shake the enisled neighbour nation
And close her career!

Semichorus I of the Pities (aerial music.)

O woven-winged squadrons of Toulon
And fellows of Rochefort,
Wait, wait for a wind, & draw westward
Ere Nelson be near!

For he ~~reads~~ reads not your force, or your freightage
Of warriors fell-handed,
Or when they will join for the onset,
Or whither they steer!

Semichorus II.

O Nelson, so zealous a watcher
Through months-long of cruizing,
They foes may elude thee a moment,
Put forth, & get clear;

And rendezvous westerly straightway
With Spain's aiding navies,
And hasten to head violation
Of Albion's frontier!

Spirit of the Years.

Methinks too much assurance thrills your note
On secrets in my locker, gentle sprites;
But it may serve. — Our thought being now reflexed
To forces operant on this English isle,
Behoves it us to enter scene by scene,
And watch the spectacle of Europe's moves
In the embroil, as they were self-ordained
According to the naïve & liberal creed
Of our great-hearted young Compassionates,
Forgetting the Prime Mover of the gear
As puppet-watchers him who pulls the strings. —
~~We~~ You'll mark the twitchings of this Bonaparte
As he with other figures foots his reel,
Until he twitch him into his lonely grave:
Also regard the frail ones that his flings
Have made gyrate like animalcula
In tepid pools. — Hence to the precinct, then,
And count as framework to the stagery
Yon architraves of sunbeam- ~~[illegible]~~ burnished cloud. —
So may ~~we~~ ye deem Earth's jackaclocks to be
Not fugled by one Will, but motion-free.

The nether sky opens, & Europe is disclosed as ~~[illegible]~~ a remote ~~[illegible]~~ figure, the Alps shaping themselves like a white

backbone, & the branching mountain-chains like ribs, the peninsular plateau of Spain forming a head. Broad & lengthy lowlands stretch from the north of France across Russia like a grey-green garment hemmed by the Ural mountains & the glistening Arctic Ocean.

The point of view then sinks downwards through space, & draws near to the surface of the perturbed ~~regions~~ countries, where the peoples, distressed by events which they did not cause, & by laws which they did not frame, are seen writhing, crawling, heaving, & vibrating in their various cities & nationalities.

Spirit of the Years (to the Spirit of the Pities)

One moment first will I reveal to thee
The Will-webs of thy fearful questioning;
For know that of my antique privileges
This gift to visualize the Mode is one,
(Though by exhaustive & strained effort only.)
See, then, & learn, ere my power pass ~~away~~ again.

A new & penetrating light descends on the spectacle, enduing men & things with a seeming transparency, & disclosing as one organism the anatomy of life & movement in all humanity & vitalized matter included in the display.

Spirit of the Pities (after a pause)

Amid this scene of bodies substantive
Strange waves I scry like winds grown visible,
Which bear men's forms on their innumerous coils,
Twining & serpentining round & through!
Also retracting threads like gossamers—
Except in being irresistible—
Which complicate with some, & balance all.

Spirit of the Years.

These are the Prime Volitions,—fibrils, veins,
Will-tissues, nerves, & pulses of the Cause,
That through Earth's life & substance ramify.
Their shapes compose the lobule of a Brain
Evolving ever that it wots not of;
A Brain whose whole connotes the Everywhere,
And whose ~~vast meshes~~ procedure may but be discerned
By phantom sight like ours; the while unguessed
Of those ~~they~~ it stirs, who ~~[illegible]~~ (even as ye do) dream
Their motions free, their orderings supreme;
Each life apart from each, with power to mete
Its own day's measures; balanced, self-complete;
Though they subsist but atoms of the One
Labouring through all, divisible from none;
But this no further now. Deem yet man's deeds self-done.

(The anatomy of the Immanent Will disappears.)

General Chorus of Intelligences (aerial music)

We'll close up Time, as a bird its van,
We'll traverse Space, as spirits can,
~~E~~ Link ~~things~~ pulses severed by leagues & years,
Bring cradles into touch with biers;
So that the far-off consequence appears
Prompt at the heel of ~~highest~~ foregone cause. —
The Prime, that willed ere Being was,
Whose Brain is ~~[illegible]~~ chasmal Space, whose thought its laws,
Which we as threads & streams discern,
We may but muse on, & never learn.

End of the Forescene.

Act First.

R King

J Brown

Act First.

Scene I.

England. A ridge in South Wessex near the sea. The time is a fine day in March, 1805. A highway crosses the ridge, & the south coast is seen bounding the landscape below, the open Channel extending beyond.

Spirit of the Years.

Hark now, & gather how the martial mood
Stirs England's humblest hearts. Anon we'll trace
Its heavings in the upper coteries there.

Spirit Sinister.

Ay; begin small, & so lead up to the greater. It is a sound dramatic principle. I always aim to follow it in my pestilences, fires, famines, & other comedies. And though, to be sure, I did not in my Lisbon earthquake, I did in my French Terror, & my St. Domingo burlesque.

Spirit of the Years.

My Lisbon earthquake, My French Terror. Wait.
Thinking thou will'st, thou dost but indicate.

A stage-coach enters, with passengers outside. Their voices after the foregoing sound thin & small, as from another medium.

First Passenger.

There seems to be a deal of traffic over Ridgeway, even at this time o' year.

Second Passenger.

Yes. It is because the King & Court are coming down here later on. They wake up this part rarely.... See, now, how the Channel & coast open out like a chart. That patch of mist below us is the town we are bound for. There's ~~Portland~~ the Isle of Slingers beyond, like a floating snail. That wide bay on the right is where the Abergavenny, Captain John Wordsworth, was wrecked last month. One can see half across to France up here.

First Passenger.

Half across. And then another little half, & then all that's behind – the Corsican mischief!

Second Passenger.

Yes. People who live hereabout – I am a native of these parts – feel the nearness of France more than they do inland.

First Passenger.

That's why we have seen so many of these marching regiments on the road. This year his grandest attempt upon us is to be made, I reckon.

Second Passenger.

May we be ready!

First Passenger

Well, we ought to be. We've had alarms enough, God knows.

Third Passenger

I much doubt his intention to come at all.

Some companies of infantry are seen ahead, & the coach presently overtakes them.

Soldiers (singing as they walk.)

We be the King's men, hale & hearty,
Marching to meet one Buonaparty;
If he won't sail, lest the wind should blow,
We shall have marched for nothing, O!
Right fol-lol!

We be the King's men hale & hearty,
Marching to meet one Buonaparty,

If he be seasick; says 'No, no!'
We shall have marched for nothing, O!
Right fol-lol!

The soldiers clear aside, & the coach passes on.

Second Passenger.

Is there truth in it that Bonaparte wrote a letter to the King last month?

First Passenger.

Yes, sir. A letter in his own hand, in which he expected the King to reply to him in the same manner.

~~The~~ soldiers (continu[ing] as they ~~recede~~ are left behind.)

We be the King's men, hale & hearty,
Marching to meet one Buonaparty;
Never mind, mates; we'll be merry, though
We may have marched for nothing, O!
Right fol-lol!

~~The soldiers clear aside, & the coach passes on~~.

Third Passenger.

And was Boney's letter friendly?

First Passenger.

Certainly, sir. He requested peace with the King.

Third Passenger.

And why shouldn't the King reply in the same manner?

First Passenger.

What! Encourage this man in an act of shameless presumption, & give him the pleasure of considering himself the equal of the King of England — whom he actually calls his brother!

Third Passenger.

He must be taken for what he is, not for what he was; & if he calls King George his brother it doesn't speak badly for his friendliness.

First Passenger.

Whether or no, the King, rightly enough, did not reply in person; ~~by th~~ but through Lord Mulgrave our Foreign Minister, to the effect that his Britannic Majesty cannot give a specific answer till he has communicated with the Continental powers.

Third Passenger.

Both the manner & the matter of the reply are British; but a huge mistake.

First Passenger.

Sir, am I to deem you a friend of Bonaparte, a traitor to your country —

Third Passenger.

Damn my wig, sir, if I'll be called a traitor by you or any Court sycophant at all at all!

Second Passenger.

Gentleman, forbear, forbear! Should such differences be suffered to arise on a spot where we may, in less than three months, be fighting for our very existence? This is foolish, I say. Heaven alone, who reads the secrets of this man's heart, can tell what his meaning & intent may be, & if his letter has been answered wisely or no.

The coach is stopped to skid the wheel for the descent, & before it starts again a dusty horseman overtakes it.

Several Passengers.

A London messenger! (to horseman) Any news, sir? We are from Bristol only.

Horseman.

Yes; much. We have declared war against Spain, & driven her into the arms of France. Bonaparte says he will date his next dispatches from London, & the landing of his army may be daily expected.

Exit horseman.

Third Passenger (to first)

Sir, I apologize. He's not to be trusted! War is his

name, & oppression is with him!

A silence follows. The coach & passengers move downwards & disappear.

Spirit of the Pities.

It ~~happed~~ chanced it that the English monarch George
Did not reply to the said Emperor!

Spirit Sinister

I saw good sport therein, & praised the Will
That It restrained so stultifying a move,
Which would have marred the European broil,
And sheathed all swords, & silenced every gun
That riddles human flesh.

Spirit of the Pities

O say no more;
If aught could gratify the Absolute
'Twould verily be thy censure, not thy praise!

Spirit of the Years.

The ruling was that we should witness things
And not dispute them. To the drama, then.
Emprizes over-Channel are the key
To this land's stir & ferment. – Thither we.

White line

Clouds gather over the scene, & slowly open elsewhere.

Scene II.

Paris. Office of the Minister of Marine. Admiral Decrès seated at a table.

A knock without.

Decrès

Come in! Good news, I hope!

An attendant enters.

Attendant

A courier, sir.

Decrès.

Show him in straightway.

The attendant goes out.

From the Emperor

As I expected!

A courier is shown in who delivers a dispatch.

Courier.

Sir, for your own hand,

And yours alone.

Decrès

Thanks. Be in waiting near.

The courier withdraws.

Decrès reads:

"I am resolved that no wild dream of Ind,
"And what we there might win; or of the West,
"And bold re-conquest there of Surinam,
"And other Dutch retreats along those coasts,
"Or British islands nigh, shall draw me now
"From piercing into England through Boulogne
"As shaped in my first plan. If I do strike,
"I strike effectively; to ~~work~~ forge which feat
"There's but one way – planting a mortal wound
"In England's heart – the very English land –
"Whose insolent & cynical reply
"To my well-based complaint on breach of faith
"Concerning Malta, as at Amiens pledged,
"Has lighted up anew such flames of ire
"As may involve the world. – Now to the case:
"Our naval forces can be all assembled
"Without the foe's foreknowledge or surmise,
"By these rules following; to whose text I ask
"Your gravest application; &, when conned,
"That steadfastly you stand by word & word,
"Making no question of one jot thereof.
"First, then, let Villeneuve wait a favouring wind
"For process westward swift to Martinique,
"Coaxing the English ~~hither~~ after: Join him there

"Gravina, Missiessy, & Ganteaume;
"Which junction once effected all our keels—
"Now nigh to sixty sail—regain the ~~Channel~~ Manche,
"While the pursuers linger in the West
At hopeless fault.—Having hoodwinked them thus,
Our boats skim over, disembark the army,
And in the twinkling of a patriot's eye
All London will be ours.
In strictest secrecy carve this to shape:
Let never an admiral or captain know
Save Villeneuve & Ganteaume; & pen each charge
With your own quill. The surer to outwit them
I start for Italy; & there, as 'twere
Engrossed in fêtes & coronation rites,
Abide till, at the need, I reach Boulogne,
And lead the enterprize.—
Napoléon."

Decrès reflects, & turns to write.

Spirit of the Pities.

More ills? How is Decrès ordained to move?

Spirit of the Years.

He sets him to the work. First to Villeneuve,

His onetime comrade & his boyhood's friend,
Now lingering at Toulon, he ~~pens~~ jots swift lines,
Then duly to Ganteaume. – 'Tis sealed forthwith,
And ~~on~~ round the seal: "Break not until at sea".

Boisterous singing is heard in the street.

~~R Johnston~~
R King

Spirit of the Pities.

I hear confused & broken sounds without,
Like those which shake the hives at eventide
When swarming nears.

Spirit of the Years.

Yea. It is but the crowd
Which sings & shouts its hot enthusiasms
~~For~~ This ~~over~~ dead-ripe design on England's shore,
Till the persuasion of its own plump words,
Acting upon mercurial temperaments
Makes hope as prophecy. "Our Emperor
"Will show himself (say they) in this exploit
"Unwavering, keen, & irresistible
"As is the lightning-prong. Our vast flotillas
"Have been embodied as by sorcery;
"Soldiers made seamen, & the ports transformed
"To rocking cities casemented with guns.

"Against these valiants ~~note the enemy's~~ balance England's means:
"Raw merchant-fellows from the countinghouse,
"Raw labourers from the fields, who thumb for arms
"Clumsy ~~& useless~~ untempered pikes forged hurriedly,
"And fancy them full quipt. Their batteries,
"Their flying carriages, their catamarans,
"Shall ~~naught~~ profit ~~not, naught~~ not, & in one summer night
"We'll find us there!"

Recording Angel

And is this prophecy true?

Spirit of the Years

Occasion will reveal.

Spirit of the Earth

What boots it, sire,
To down this dynasty, set that one up,
Goad panting peoples to the strife thereof,
Make wither here my fruit, maintain it there,
And hold me travailling through fineless years
In vain & objectless monotony,
When all such tedious conjuring could be shunned
By life's extinction? Howsoever wise
The governance of meek mortality,
A juster wisdom ~~that which~~ his who should have ruled
It had not been.

Spirit of the Years.

Nay, something hidden urges
The giving matter motion; & these coils
Perhaps are
Are, maybe, good as any.
may be as

Spirit of the Pities

But — why any?

Spirit of the Years.

Sprite of the Pities, ask the Immanent!
I am but an accessory of Its will
Whom chance has rendered conscious; & at most
Figure as bounden witness of Its laws.

Spirit of the Pities

How ask the aim of unrelaxing Will,
Tranced in Its purpose to unknowingness?

Spirit of the Years.

Thou answerest well. But cease to ask of me.
Meanwhile the moil proceeds. — We turn herefrom,
Change our World-figures, & observe forthwith
How the High Influence sways the English realm,
And how the jacks click out their reasonings there.

The Cloud-curtain ~~falls~~ draws.

Scene III.

London. The old House of Commons.

A long chamber with a gallery on each side supported by thin columns having gilt Ionic capitals. Three round-headed windows are at the further end above the Speaker's chair, which is backed by a huge pedimented structure in white & gilt, surmounted by the lion & the unicorn. The windows are uncurtained, one being open, through which ~~& in the midnight gloom without~~ some boughs are seen waving in the midnight gloom without. Wax candles, burnt low, wave & gutter in a brass chandelier which hangs from the middle of the ceiling, & in brackets from the galleries.

The House is sitting, the benches, which extend round to the Speaker's elbows, being closely packed, & the galleries nearly full. Among the members present on the Government side are Pitt & other ministers with their supporters, including Canning, Castlereagh, Lord C. Somerset, Erskine, W. Dundas, Huskisson, Rose, Best, Elliot, Dallas, & the general body of the party. On the opposite side are noticeable Fox, Sheridan, Windham, Whitbread, Grey, T. Grenville, Tierney, Earl Temple, Ponsonby, G. & H. Walpole, Dudley North, & Timothy Shelley. Speaker Abbot occupies the Chair.

Spirit of the Years (to two Recording Angels.)

As forewords to the scene, as means to aid
Our younger comrades in its construing,
Pray spread your scripture, & rehearse in brief
The reasonings here of late — to whose result
Words of to-night form sequence.

The Recording Angels (from their books, chant antiphonally, in a minor recitative.

Angel I.

Feeble-framed dull unresolve, unresourcefulness,
~~Clouded~~ Sat in the halls of the Kingdom's high councillors.
Whence an untactical torpid despondency
Weighed as with winter the national mind.

Angel II.

England ~~up~~stands forth to the sword of Napoleon
Nakedly — not an ally in support of her;
Men & munitions ~~[illegible]~~ dispersed indecisively;
Projects of range & scope poorly defined.

Angel I.

Once more, then, Pitt hears the land cry aloud to him. —
Frail though & spent, & in hunger of restfulness,
Once more responds he, dead fervours to energize,
Aims to concentre, slack efforts to bind.

Angel II.

Ere the first fruit thereof voices grow audible,
Holding but lightly his dream of ~~[illegible]~~ home guardianships,
Jestingly, earnestly, hailing it serviceless,
Tardy, inept, & uncouthly designed.

Angels I & II.

So now, to-night, in the slashing old sentences,
Hear them speak, — gravely these, those with gayheartedness, —
Midst their admonishments little conceiving how
Scarlet the scroll that the years will unwind!

~~Spirit of the Years.~~

~~And now for the locations ~~they~~ it refers to.~~
~~been referred to.~~

Spirit of the Pities (to the Spirit of the Years.)
Let us put on & suffer for the nonce
The feverish fleshings of Humanity,
And join the pale debaters here convened.
So may thy soul be won to sympathy
By donning their poor moulds.

Spirit of the Years.

I'll humour thee,
Though my unpassioned essence could not change
Did I incarn in moulds of all mankind!

Spirit Ironic

'Tis enough to make every little dog in England run to mixen to hear this Pitt sung so strenuously! I'll be the third of the incarnate, on the chance of hearing the tune played the other way.

Spirit Sinister

And I the fourth. There's sure to be something in my line toward, where politicians are gathered together!

Lucas

J. Brown

They enter the Gallery of the House in the disguise of ~~[illegible]~~ four ordinary strangers.

Sheridan (rising)

The Bill I would have leave to introduce
Is framed, sir, to repeal last Session's Act,
~~[illegible]~~ By courtly scribes intituled a provision
For this isle's proper guard; but elsewhere known
As Mr. Pitt's new patent parish Pill.

(laughter)

The ministerial countenances, I mark,
Congeal to dazed surprise at my straight motion –
Why: ~~[illegible]~~ passes sane conjecture. It may be
That with a haughty & unwavering faith
In their own battering-rams of argument,
They deemed our buoyance whelmed, & sapped, & sunk
To hope's sheer bottom, whence a miracle
Was all could work to float ~~them~~ us: or, maybe,
They are amazed at our rude disrespect
In making mockery of an English law
Sprung sacred from the King's Prime-minister. –
I hear them snort; but let them wince at will
My duty must be done; shall be done quickly
By citing some few facts.

An Act for our defence!

It weakens, not defends: & oversea
Swoln France's ruler & his myrmidons
This moment know it, & can jeer thereat.
Our people know it too — those who can look
Behind the scenes of this poor painted show
Called soldiering! — The Act has failed, must fail,
As my right honorable friend well showed
When speaking t'other night, whose silencing
By his right honorable *vis-à-vis*
Was of the genuine Governmental sort,
And like the catamarans their sapience shaped
All fizzle & no harm. (*laughter*). The Act, in brief,
Effects this much: that the whole force of England
Is strengthened by — eleven thousand men!
So sorted that the British infantry
Are now eight hundred less than heretofore!
In Ireland, where the personal influence
Of the right honorable gentleman
Particularly prevails, *eleven* men
Have been amassed!* And in the Cinque-Port towns,
Where he is held in absolute veneration,
His method has so quickened martial fire
As to bring in — one man. O would that man
Might meet my sight! (*laughter*). — A Hercules, no doubt,
A god-like emanation from this Act,

Who with his single arm will overthrow
All Buonaparté's legions ere their keels
Have scraped one pebble of our fortless shores!

He sits down amid cheers.

The candlesnuffers go round, & Pitt rises. During the momentary pause before he speaks the House assumes an attentive stillness, in which can be heard the rustling of the trees without, a horn from an early coach, & the voice of the watch crying the hour.

Pitt.

Not one on this side but appreciates
Those mental gems & airy pleasantries
Flashed by the honourable gentleman,
Who shines in them by birthright. Each device
Of drollery he has laboured to outshape,
(Or treasured up from others who have shaped it), ××
Displays that are the mintage of the moment,
(Or ~~brushed & all~~ burnished, and matured by sleeping on) —
Dry hoardings in his book of commonplace,
Stored without stint of toil through days & months —
He heaps into one mass, & lights & fans
As fuel for his flaming eloquence,
Which is maintained without a thought or care
If germane to the theme, or not at all.

Now vain indeed were it should I assay
To match him in such sort. For, sir, alas,
To use imagination as the ground
Of chronicle, take farce & ~~fancy~~ mythic tale
As texts for prophecy, is not my gift,
Being but a person primed with simple fact,
Undecked ~~with jewelled~~ by jewelled art. — But to the thing.
The preparations of the enemy
~~For his~~ With ~~dogged~~ fell purpose to invade our land
Advance with a sustained activity.
~~They~~ They are seen, ~~&~~ they are known, by you & by us all.
But ~~he has shown~~ they reveal no clear-shaped tentative
~~In furtherance of the threat,~~ ~~before~~ whose ~~date~~ coming off
~~To execute his menace, & long years~~
Long years may well postpone
~~May supersede~~ [illegible]; in which the Act
Will far outstrip him, & the thousands called
~~the~~ Yearly to join the ranks by its provisions
In process sure, if slow, will match the lines
Of English regiments — seasoned, cool, resolved —
To glorious length & firm prepotency.
And why, then, should we dream of its repeal
Ere profiting by its advantages?
R.K.
N.B. Must the House listen to such wilding words
As this proposal at the very hour
When the Act's operance finds its ordered grooves
And enters into full utility?

The motion of the honourable gentleman
Reminds me aptly of a publican
Who should, when malting, mixing, mashing's past,
Fermenting, barrelling, & spigoting,
Quick taste the brew, & shake his sapient head,
And cry in acid voice: The ale is new!
Brew old, you varlets; cast this slop away!

<u>Cheers</u>

But gravely, Sir, I would conclude to-night;
And, as a serious man on serious things,
I now speak here. I pledge myself to this:—
Unprecedented & magnificent
As were our strivings in the previous war
Our efforts in the present shall transcend them,
As men will learn. Such efforts are not sized
By this light measuring-rule my critic here
33/5 Whips from his pocket like a joiner-jack.
Strenuous & toilsome must war's details be—
Not in a moment's stroke extemporized.—

The strange fatality that dogs the times
Wherein our lot is cast, has no example.
Times are they fraught with peril, trouble, toil;
We have to mark their lowerings, & to face them.
Sir, reading thus the full significance
Of these big days, great though my wantage be,

Can any hold of those who know my past
That I, of all men, slight our safeguarding?
No: by all honour no! — Were I convinced
That such could haunt the minds of members here,
My sorrowing thereat would doubly shade
The shade on England now! So I do trust
All in the House will my assurance take,
And credit my deliverance here to-night,
That in this vital point of watch & ward
Against the threatenings from yonder coast
We stand prepared; & under Providence
Shall fend whatever hid or open stroke
A foe may deal.

N. Brown
~~G. Lucas~~
M Wallace

He sits down with symptoms of exhaustion, & amid ministerial cheers.

Windham.

The question that compels the House to-night
Is not of differences 'twixt wit & wit,
But if for England it be well or no
To null the present Act as one inept
For setting up with speed & hot effect
The red machinery of desperate war. —
Whatever it may do, or not, 'tis this,
A statesman's raw experiment. If ill,

Shall more experiments & more be tried
In face of jeopardy that makes demand
For sureness of proceeding? Must this House
Exchange safe action based on practised lines
For yet more ventures into risks unknown
To gratify a quaint projector's whim,
The while the enemy hang round our gates
To profit by mistake?

My friend who spoke

Found comedy in the ~~Act. Yet~~ measure comical
As it may be in parentage & feature,
Most grave & tragic in its consequence
This Act may prove. We are moving thoughtlessly,
We squander precious, brief, life-saving time
On idle guess-games. Fail the measure must,
Nay, failed it has already; & should stir
Resolve in its progenitor himself
To move for its repeal!

Cheers.

Whitbread.

I rise but to subjoin a phrase or two
To those of my right honourable friend.
I, too, am one who reads the present danger
As passing all our risks of heretofore.
For why? Our bold & reckless enemy

Relaxing not his plans, has gained him time
To mass his monstrous force on all the coigns
From which our coast is most assailable.
Ay, even by sea his concentrations work:
Two vast united squadrons of his sail
Move at this moment viewless on the ~~seas~~ waves.—
Their whereabouts, untraced, unguessable,
Will not be known to us till some black blow
Be struck by them in some undreamt-of quarter
To end our rule.

That we are ~~thereupon~~ reasonably secured therefrom
By such an Act is but a madman's dream.
A commonwealth so situate ~~must~~ cries aloud
For more, far greater, measures! End an Act
In Heaven's name, then, which only can obstruct
The adumbration of a sounder plan
For building up an army.

Cheers.

Bathurst

Sir, the point
To any sober mind is bright as noon:
Whether the Act should have ~~a seemly~~ befitting trial,
Or be condemned at sight. I firmly hold
The latter rank iniquity.— One task

Is theirs who would repeal the present Act—
To show & bring to light ~~the~~ a substitute.
Sir, they have none; they have given no thought to one,
And thus their deeds incautiously disclose
Their cloaked intention & most secret aim.
With them the question is not how to shape
A finer scheme of military ~~defence~~ guard,
~~Whatever it may~~ But who shall be the future ministers
To whom such scheme of military defence,
Whatever it may ~~be~~ prove, shall be entrusted!
They even ask the country gentlemen
To join them in this plot. But, ~~let me say~~ God be praised,
Those gentlemen are sound, & of repute;
Their names, their property, their character,
Their numbers, their attainments, & their blood,
Safeguard them from an onslaught on an Act
For ends so sinister & palpable!

Loud cheers.

Fuller.

I disapprove of censures of this Act.—
All who can entertain such hostile thought
Would swear that black ~~was~~ is white, that night is day.
No honest man will join a company
Who'd overthrow their country for their gain!

Laughter.

Tierney.

It is incumbent on me to declare
In the last speaker's face my censure, based
On grounds distinct & constitutional.—
An Act it is that labours to create
A standing army, large & permanent;
Which kind of force has ever been beheld
With jealous-eyed disfavour in this House.
It makes for sure oppression, binding men
To serve for less than service proves it worth
Conditioned by no hampering penalty.
Let not the Act deface the statute-book
But blot it out forthwith.

Hear, hear.

Fox (rising amid applause from the opposition.)

At this late hour,
After the ~~[illegible]~~ riddling fire the Act has drawn out,
My words shall hold the House the briefest while.
Too obvious to the most unwilling mind
It grows that the existence of this ~~Act~~ Law
Experience & reflection have condemned.
Professing to do much, it makes for nothing;
Framed for assuring all, it comforts none.
Not only so; while feeble in effect
It shows it vicious in its principle.

Mr Wallace
Mr Brown

Engaging to raise men for the common weal
It sets a galling & unequal tax
Capriciously on our communities. —
The history of the modern world unknows
More flagrant cases of oppressiveness
Than those this measure works to perpetuate,
Which (like all Bills ~~of~~ this favoured statesman frames ~~pet minister~~,
And clothes ~~Clothed~~ with tapestries ~~a drapery~~ of rhetoric
Disguising their real web of commonplace)
Though held as shaped for English bulwarking,
Breathes in its heart the perverse schemes of party,
And ~~The~~ instincts toward oligarchic power,
Galling the many to relieve the few!

~~The members~~ Cheers:

Whatever breadth & sense of equity
Inform the measures of this ~~ministry~~ minister,
Those qualities nigh ~~must~~ always ~~[illegible]~~ trace their root
To measures that his ~~their~~ predecessors framed.
And ere ~~such~~ his Government can dare assert
Superior claims to England's confidence,
They owe it to their honour & ~~repute~~ good name
To furnish better proof of such a claim
Than is revealed by the abortiveness ~~abortiveness one-sidedness~~
Of this thing called an Act for our Defence.
To the great gifts of its artificer ~~progenitor~~

No member of this House is more disposed
To yield full recognition than am I.
No man has found more reason so to do
Through the long roll of disputatious years
Wherein we have stood opposed.....
But if one single fact could counsel me
To entertain a doubt of those great gifts,
And cancel faith in his ~~sagacity~~ capacity,
That fact would be the vast imprudence shown
In staking recklessly repute like his
On such an Act as he has offered us —
so false in principle, so poor in fruit.
Sir, the achievements & effects thereof
Have Furnished not one fragile argument
Which all the partiality of friendship
Can kindle to consider as the mark
Of a clear, vigorous, freedom-~~loving~~ fostering mind!

He sits down amid cheers from the Opposition

Sheridan.

~~Brief shall~~ my summary shall be brief & to the point. —
The said right honorable ~~gentleman~~ prime minister
Has thought it proper to declare my speech
The jesting of an irresponsible; —
Words from a person who has never read
The Act he ~~thinks~~ claims him urgent to repeal.

Such quips & sarcasms (as he reckons them)
He implicates as gathered from long hoards
Stored up through months of care, to be discharged
With sudden burst of pyrotechnic art
On the devoted, gentle, modest head
Of the right honourable gentleman. (laughter)
But were my humble, sad, severe oration (laughter)
Indeed such rattle as he rated it,
Is it not strange & passing precedent
That the illustrious chief of Government
Should have uprisen with such indecent speed
And strenuously replied? He, Sir, knows well
That vast & luminous talents such as his
Could not have been demanded to choke off
A verbiage marked by nothing more of weight
Than ignorant irregularity!
Nec Deus intersit — and so & so —
Is a well-worn citation whose close fit
None ~~understands~~ will perceive more clearly in this ~~House~~ Temple
Than its presiding ~~genius~~ Deity opposite (laughter.)
His ~~ponderous~~ thunderous answer thus perforce condemns him!
□ Moreover, to top all, he while replying,
He still thought best to leave intact the reasons
On which my blame was founded. ¶ Thus, then, stands
My motion unimpaired, convicting clearly

Of dire perversion that capacity
We formerly admired.—

(Cries of "Oh, Oh")

This Minister
Whose circumventions never circumvent,
Whose Coalitions fail to coalesce;
This dab at secret treaties known to all
This darling of the aristocracy—
(Laughter. "Oh, oh"; cheers, & cries of "Divide")
Has brought the millions to the verge of ruin,
By pledging them to Continental quarrels
Of which we see no end!

Cheers.

The members rise to divide *

Spirit of the Pities.

It irks me that they thus should Yea & Nay,
As though a power lay in their oraclings,
If each decision work unconsciously,
And would be operant though unparted were
~~A single~~ One pair of lips!

Spirit of the Earth

There may react on things
Some influence from these, indefinitely.

foot note] * The foregoing ~~is~~ gives the substance of the memorable debate which took place on the evening represented; but reports ~~somewhat~~ differ in some particulars.

And even on It, whose outcome we all are:

Spirit of the Years.

Hypotheses! — More boots it to remind
The younger here of our ethereal band
And hierarchy of Intelligences,
That this thwart Parliament whose moods we watch —
So insular, empiric, unideal —
May ~~figure~~ forth in sharp & salient lines
To retrospective eyes of afterdays,
And print its legend large on History.
For one cause — if I read the times aright —
To-night's appearance of its minister
In the assembly he from youth has swayed
Is near his last, & themes to-night launched forth
Will take a tincture from that memory,
When men recall the ~~tone~~ scene & circumstance
That hung about his pleadings. — But no more;
~~Mere declamation all are these loud periods~~,
The ritual of each party is rehearsed,
Dislodging not one vote or prejudice;
~~The ministers their ministries retain.~~
~~And ministers remain in [illegible]~~.
And In's as In's, & Outs as Outs, remain.

A minor Spirit

Meanwhile what of the foeman's vast array
That wakes these tones?

Spirit of the Years.

Abide the event, young shade:
Soon stars will shut & show a springtime dawn,
And sunbeams fountain forth, that will arouse
These forming bands to full activity.

An honourable member ~~The members proceed to the lobbies, One~~ reports that he spies strangers.

We now cast off these mortal manacles,
And speed us seaward.

The four phantoms ~~vanish~~ from the Gallery. The members ~~proceed~~ file out to the lobbies. The House & Westminster recede into the films of night, & the point of observation shifts rapidly across the Channel.

R. Brown

Scene IV.

R Johnston

Morning. The Harbour of Boulogne radiant in early sunlight. The French army of invasion is disclosed. On the hills on either side of the town & behind appear large military camps formed of timber huts. Lower down are other camps of more or less permanent kind, the whole affording accommodation for one hundred & fifty thousand men.

South of the town is an extensive basin surrounded by quays, the heaps of fresh soil around showing it to be a recent excavation from the banks of the Liane. The basin is crowded with the flotilla, consisting of hundreds of vessels of sundry kinds; flat-bottomed brigs with guns & two masts; boats of one mast, carrying each an artillery waggon, two guns, & a two-stalled horse-box; transports with three low masts; & long narrow pinnaces arranged for sixty oars.

Timber, saw-mills & new-cut planks spread in profusion around, & many of the town residences are seen to be adapted for warehouses & infirmaries.

Dumb Show.

Moving in this scene are countless companies of soldiery, engaged in a drill-practice of embarking & disembarking, & of hoisting horses into the vessels & landing them again. Vehicles bearing provisions of many sorts load & unload before the temporary warehouses. Further off, on the open land bodies of troops are at field-drill. Other bodies of soldiers, half stripped & encrusted with mud, are labouring as navvies in repairing the excavations.

An English squadron of about twenty sail, comprising a ship or two of the line, frigates, brigs, & luggers, confronts the busy spectacle from the sea.

A curtain of cloud closes on the scene.

Scene V.

London. An evening party at the house of a Lady of Quality. ~~Present~~, A fashionable crowd ~~which~~ is present, includes the Dukes of Beaufort & Rutland, Lords Malmesbury, Harrowby, Eldon, Grenville, Castlereagh, Sidmouth & Mulgrave with their ladies; also Canning, Percival, Townshend, Lady Anne Hamilton, Mrs Damer, Lady Caroline Lamb, & many other notabilities.

A Gentleman (offering his snuffbox.)

So, then, the Treaty anxiously concerted
Between ourselves & frosty Muscovy
Is duly signed?

A Cabinet Minister.

Was signed a few days back,
And is in force. And we do firmly hope
The loud pretensions & the stunning dins
From new aggressiveness by France's chief,
Now daily heard, these laudable exertions
May keep in curb; that ere our greening land
Darken its leaves beneath the Lammas suns,
The independence of the Continent

May be assured, & all the sun rumpled flags
Of ancient dynasties so rudely mauled,
Extend their honoured hues as heretofore.

Gentleman

So be it. Yet this man is a volcano;
And proven 'tis, by God, volcanoes choked
Have ere now turned to earthquakes!

A lady comes up & playfully taps his arm.

Lady.

What is the news? —
The chequerboard of diplomatic ~~games~~ moves
Is London, all the world knows: here ~~arise~~ are born
All inspirations of the Continent. —
So tell!

Gentleman.

Ay. Inspirations now abound!
~~The walls have voices nowadays~~.

Lady.

Nay, but your looks are grave! That measured speech
Betokened matter that will waken us. —
Is it some piquant cruelty of his?
Or other tickling horror from abroad
The packet has brought in?

Gentleman

The treaty's signed!

Minister

Whereby the parties mutually agree
To knit in union & in general league
All outraged Europe.

Lady.

Such knitting close sounds well;
But how ensure its not unravelling?

Minister.

Well; by the terms. There are among them these:
Five hundred thousand active men in arms
Shall strike (supported by Britannic aid
In vessels, men, & money subsidies)
To free North Germany & Hanover
From trampling foes; deliver Switzerland,
Unbind the galled republic of the Dutch,
Rethrone in Piedmont the Sardinian King,
Make Naples ~~foe~~ sword-proof, un-French Italy
From shore to shore; & thoroughly guarantee
A settled order to the divers states;
Thus rearing solid barriers in each realm
Against the thrust of his usurping hand.

Spirit of the Years

They trow not what is shaping otherwhere
The while they talk thus stoutly!

Spirit-Messenger.

Bid me go
may with them and
And join them, & all blandly kindle them
By bringing, ere material transit can,
This new surprise?

Spirit of the Years.

Yea, for a moment, wouldst.

The spirit-messenger, enters ~~of~~ the apartment in the form of a personage of fashion, ~~d as if~~ newly arrived. He advances & ~~joins~~ addresses the group.

Spirit-messenger.

The Treaty moves all tongues to-night. – Ha, well –
So much on paper!

Gentleman

What on land & sea?
You look, old friend, full primed with latest news.

Spirit Messenger.

Yea, this. The Italy our mighty pact

Delivers from the French & Bonaparte
Makes haste to crown him! – Turning from Boulogne
He speeds toward Milan, there to glory him
In second coronation by the Pope,
And set upon his irrepressible brow
Lombardy's iron crown.

The spirit mingles with the throng, moves away, & disappears.

~~R Johnson~~
R King

Lady.

Fair Italy.

Alas, alas!

Lord

Yet thereby English folk
Are freed him. – Faith, as ancient people say,
It's an ill wind that blows good luck to none!

Minister

Who is your friend that drops so airily
This precious pinch of salt on our raw skin?

Gentleman

Why, Norton. You know Norton well enough.

Minister

Nay. 'Twas not he. Norton of course I know.

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I thought him Stewart for a moment, but —

Lady.

But I well scanned him — 'twas Lord Abercorn;
For, said I to myself, "O quaint old bean,
To sleep in black silk sheets so funnily" —
That is, if the town rumour on't be true.

Lord.

My wig, ma'am, no! 'Twas a much younger man.

Gentleman

But let me call him! Monstrous silly this,
That I don't know my friends!

They look around. The gentleman goes among the surging & babbling guests, makes inquiries, & returns with a perplexed look.

Gentleman

They tell me, sure,
That he's not here to-night!

Minister

I can well swear
It was not Norton. — 'Twas some lively buck
Who chose to put himself in masquerade,

And entered for a joke. I'll tell our host.
Meantime the absurdity of his report
Is more than manifested. How knows he
The plans of Bonaparte by lightning-flight;
And ere another man in England knows!

Lady.

Something uncanny's in it all, if true.
Good Lord, the thought gives me a sudden sweat,
That fairly makes my linen stick to me!

Minister

Ha-ha! 'Tis excellent. But we'll find out
Who this impostor was.

They disperse, look furtively for the stranger, & speak of the incident to others of the crowded company.

Spirit of the Years

Now let us ~~move us~~ vision onward, till we sight
Famed Milan's ~~maze~~ aisles of marble, sun-alight,
And there behold, unbid, the coronation-rite.

The confused tongues of the assembly waste away into distance, till they are heard but as the ripples of the sea from a high cliff, the scene becoming small & indistinct therewith. This passes into silence, & the ~~wh~~ dis whole disappears.

Scene VI.

Milan. The interior of the Cathedral on a sunny May day. The walls, arches, & columns are draped in silk fringed with gold. A gilded throne stands in front of the High Altar. A closely packed assemblage, in every variety of rich costume, waits in breathless expectation.

Dumb Show.

From a private corridor leading to a door in the aisle the Empress Joséphine enters, in a shining costume & diamonds that collect rainbow-colours from the sunlight piercing the clerestory windows. She is preceded by the Princess Eliza, & surrounded by her ladies. A pause follows, & then comes the procession of the Emperor, consisting of hussars, heralds, pages, aides-de-camp, presidents of institutions, officers of state bearing the insignia of the Empire & of Italy, & seven ladies with offerings. The Emperor himself appears in royal robes, wearing the Imperial crown, & carrying the sceptre. He is followed by ministers & officials of the royal household. His gait is rather defiant than dignified, & a bluish pallor overspreads his face.

He is met by the Cardinal Archbishop Caprara & the clergy, who burn incense before him as he proceeds towards the throne. Rolling notes of music burst forth, & loud applause from the congregation.

Spirit of the Pities.

What is the creed that these rich rites disclose?

Spirit of the Years.

A local thing called Christianity,
Which the wild drama of the wheeling spheres
Includes, with many other such, in dim,
Pathetical, & brief parentheses;
Beyond whose reach, uninfluenced, unconcerned,
The great world-systems sweep around their suns
~~The systems of the suns go sweeping on~~
In mathematic role unceasingly.

Spirit of the Pities.

I did not recognize it here, forsooth;
Though in its early, lovingkindly days
Of gracious ~~purposings 'twas~~ purpose it was much to me.

Archbishop (addressing Bonaparte)

Sire, with that clemency & right-goodwill
Which beautify Imperial Majesty,
You deigned acceptance of the homages
That we the clergy & the Milanese
Were proud to offer when your entrance here
Streamed radiance on our ancient capital.
Please, then, to consummate the boon to-day

Beneath this holy roof, so soon to thrill
With solemn strains & lifting harmonies
Befitting such a coronation hour:
And bend a tender fatherly regard
On this assembly, now at one with me
To supplicate the Author of All Good
That He endow your most Imperial person
With every heavenly gift.

The procession advances, & the Emperor seats himself on the throne, with the banners & regalia of the empire on his right, & those of Italy on his left hand. Shouts & triumphal music accompany the proceedings, after which Divine service commences.

Spirit of the Pities

Thus are the self-styled servants of the Highest
Constrained by earthly duress to embrace
Mighty imperiousness as it were choice,
And hand the Italian sceptre unto one
~~Who practised first to flout antiquity~~
Who, with a saturnine, sour-humoured grin,
At first professed to flout antiquity,
~~Despise~~ Scorn limp conventions, smile at mouldy thrones,
And level dynasts down to journeymen! —
Yet he, advancing swiftly on that track
Whereby his active soul, fair Freedom's child,

Makes strange decline, now labours to ~~achieve~~ ensure
The thing it overtimes.

Spirit of the Years.

Thou reasonest ever thuswise — even as if
~~His~~ A self-formed force had shaped his loud career.

Spirit ~~Sinister~~ Ironic.

Do not the prelate's accents falter thin,
His lips with in-kept laughter grow deformed,
While blessing one whose aim is but to win
The golden seats that other b—s have warmed?

Spirit of the Years

~~Peace~~ Soft, jester; scorn not puppetry so skilled,
Even made to feel by the ingenious Dame.

Spirit of the Earth

Yea: that they feel, & puppetry remain
Is an owned flaw in her consistency
Whose ~~hand~~ child I am. Blame Nature not therein:
Her deftest mothering in fairest spheres
Is ordinanced by terms inexorable!

Spirit Sinister

The lady's remark is apposite, & reminds me that, ~~so desired~~,

I may as well hold my tongue as desired. For if my ~~patting~~ casual scorn, Father Years, should set thee trying to prove that there is any ~~sense~~ rhyme or reason in the Universe, thou wilt not accomplish it by Doomsday! Small blame to her, however; she must cut her coat according to her cloth, as they say down below there.

Spirit of the Years.

O would that I could move It to enchain thee,
And shut thee up, ~~another~~ at once, thy thousand years —
(To cite a legend of ~~the~~ terrestrial fame)
Thou Iago of the Incorporeal World
"As they would say below there".

Spirit of the Pities.

Would thou could'st!
But move One scoped above percipience, Sire,
It cannot be!

Spirit of the Earth

The spectacle proceeds.

Spirit Sinister

And we may as well give all attention thereto, for what is doing in other continents is not worth eyesight. Our meanest deputies can take note of the contemptibly small evils going on there.

The ceremonial in the Cathedral continues. Napoléon goes to the front of the altar, ascends the steps, &, taking up the crown of Lombardy, places it on his head.

Napoléon.

'Tis God has given it to me. So be it.
Let any who shall touch it now beware!

Thunders of applause.

The sacrament of the Mass. Napoléon reads the oath in a loud voice.

Heralds.

Give ear! Napoléon, Emperor of the French
And King of Italy, is crowned & throned!

Congregation.

Long live the Emperor & King. Huzza!

Music. The Te Deum.

Spirit of the Pities.

That sorry stroke of vauntery he displays
In planting on his brow the Lombard crown,
Means rank erasure of the Luneville pacts,
And lets confusion loose on Europe's peace
For many an undawned year! From this rash hour
Austria but waits her opportunity

By secret increase of her armaments
To link her to his foes. — I'll speak to him.

He throws a whisper into Napoléon's ear.

Lieutenant Bonaparte.

Would it not seemlier be to shut thy heart
To these unhealthy splendours? — Render thee
To whom thou swarest ~~at~~ first, fair Liberty?

Napoléon.

Who spoke to me?

Archbishop.

Not I, sire. Not a soul.

Napoléon.

Dear Joséphine, my queen, didst call my name?

Joséphine.

I spoke not, sire.

Napoléon.

Thou didst not, tender spouse;
I know it. Such harsh utterance was not thine.
'Twas but aggressive Fancy working spells
Upon a mind o'erwrought!

The service closes. The clergy advance with the canopy to the foot of the throne, & the procession forms to return to the Palace.

Spirit of the Years.

Officious sprite,
Thou'rt young, & dost not heed the Cause of things
Which some of us have hinted long to thee;
Else wouldst thou not have hailed the Emperor,
Whose acts do but outshape Its governing.

Spirit of the Pities

I feel, sire, as I must! This tale of Will
And Life's direction by Unconsciousness
I cannot heed.

Spirit of the Years.

Let me then once again
Show to thy sceptic eye the very nerves
And sinews of this all-informing Power,
And bring conclusion to thy unbelief.

The scene assumes the preternatural ~~vision~~ transparency beforementioned, & there ~~are~~ is beheld again as it were the interior of a brain ~~[illegible]~~ which manifests the visibly volitions of the Universal Will, ~~&~~ and of whose tissues the personages of the action form portion.

Spirit of the Pities.

Enough. And yet for very sorriness
I cannot own such phantasmatics real!

Spirit of the Years.

Affection ever was illogical.

Spirit Ironic (aside)

How should the sprite own to such logic — a mere juvenile — who only came into being in what the earthlings call their Tertiary Age.

The scene changes. The exterior of the Cathedral takes the place of the interior, & the point of view recedes, the whole fabric diminishing into distance & becoming like a small delicately carved alabaster ornament. The city itself sinks to miniature, the Alps show afar as a white corrugation, the Adriatic & the Gulf of Genoa appear on this & that hand with Italy between them, till clouds cover the panorama.

Act Second.

Scene I.

The Dockyard, Gibraltar. The Rock is seen rising behind the Town & the Alameda Gardens, & the English fleet rides at anchor in the Bay, across which the Spanish shore from Algeciras to Carnero Point shuts in the West. Southward over the Strait is the African coast.

Spirit of the Years.

Our swiftly-set Proskenion now affords
An outlook on this ancient-storied Rock,
As prefix to the vision of the Fleets
Spanish & French, linked for fell purposings.

Recording Angel (reciting)

Their motions & manoeuvres, since the fame
Of Bonaparte's enthronement at Milan
~~Touched~~ Swept swiftly through Europe's pale communities,
Have stretched the English mind to wide surmise.

Many well based alarms (which strange report
Much aggravates) as to the pondered blow,
~~Beset~~ Flutter the public pulse: all points in turn—
Malta, Brazil, Wales, Ireland, British Ind—
Being held as feasible for force like theirs,
Of lavish numbers & unrecking aim.
"Where, where is Nelson?" questions every tongue;—
"How views he so unparalleled a scheme?"
Their slow uncertain apprehensions ask.
"When Villeneuve puts to sea with all his ~~keels~~ force,
"What may he not achieve, if swift his course!"

Spirit of the Years.

I'll call in Nelson, who has stepped ashore
For the first time these ~~two~~ thrice twelvemonths & more,
And with him one whose insight has alone
Pierced the real project of Napoleon.

Enter Nelson & Collingwood, who pace up & down.

Spirit ~~Nelson~~ of the Pities

~~In that, dear Coll, the letter which you wrote me~~
~~Had so much pith that I was fain to see you~~
Note Nelson's worn out features. Much has he
Suffered from labour & anxiety!

Nelson.

In short, dear Coll, the letter which you wrote me
Had so much pith that I was fain to see you;
For I am sure that you indeed divine
The true intent & compass of a plot
Which I have spelled in vain.

Collingwood

I weighed it thus:
Their flight to th' Indies being to draw us off,
That, & no more, & clear these coasts of us —
The standing obstacle to his device —
He cared not what was done at Martinique,
Or where, provided that the general end
Should not be jeopardized — that is to say,
The full-united squadrons' quick return. —
Gravina & Villeneuve, once back to Europe,
Can straight make Ferrol, raise there the blockade,
Then haste to Brest, there to relieve Ganteaume,
And next with four-or-five-&-fifty sail
Bear down upon our coast as they see fit. —
I read they aim to strike at Ireland still,
As formerly, & as I wrote to you.

Nelson.

So far your thoughtful & sagacious words

Have hit the facts. But 'tis no Irish bay
The villains aim to drop their anchors in:
My word for it: they make the southern shore,
And this vast squadron handled by Villeneuve
Is meant to cloak the passage of their strength,
Massed in those transports — we being kept elsewhere
By feigning forces. — Good God, Collingwood,
I must be gone! Yet two more days remain
Ere I can get away. — I must be gone!

Collingwood.

Wherever you may go to, dear my lord,
You carry victory with you. Let them launch,
Your name will blow them back, like sou'-west gales
The gulls that beat against them from the shore.

Nelson.

Good Collingwood, I know you trust in me:
But ships are ships, & do not kindly come
Out of the slow docks of the Admiralty
Like wharfside pigeons when they are whistled for: —
And there's a damned disparity of force,
Which means tough work awhile for you & me!

(The Spirit of the Years whispers to Nelson)

And I have warnings, warnings, Collingwood,

That my effective hours are shortening here;
Strange warnings now others, as 'twere within me,
Which, though I fear them not, I recognize!.....
However, by God's help, I'll live to meet
These foreign boasters; yea, I'll finish them;
And then — well, Gunner Death may finish me!

Collingwood.

View not your life so gloomily, my lord:
'Tis charmed, a needed purpose to fulfil!

Nelson.

Ah, Coll. Lead bullets are not all that wound....
I have a feeling here of dying fires,
A sense of much & deep unspoken censure,
Which, compassing about my private life,
Makes all my public service lustreless
In my own eyes. — I fear I am ~~so~~ much condemned
For those dear Naples & Palermo days,
And her who was the sunshine of them all!....
He who is with himself dissatisfied,
Though all the world find satisfaction in him,
Is like a rainbow-coloured bird gone blind,
That gives delight it shares not. Happiness?
It's the philosopher's stone no alchemy

Shall light on in this world I am weary of.—
Smiling I'd pass to my long home to-morrow
Could I with honour, & my country's gain*.
But let's adjourn. I waste your hours ashore
By such ill-timed confessions!

They pass out of sight, & the scene closes.

I and
R King

Scene II.

Off Ferrol. The French & Spanish combined squadrons. On board the French admiral's flag-ship. Villeneuve is discovered in his cabin, writing a letter.

A minor ~~Spirit~~ Intelligence

He pens in fits, with pallid restlessness,
Like one who sees misfortune walk the wave
And can nor face nor flee it.

Spirit of the Years.

He traces for the minister Decrès
Words that go heavily! ~~Because the words~~,
~~[illegible]~~.

Villeneuve (writing.)
~~Recording Angel (reading)~~

"I am made the arbiter in ~~of~~ vast designs
"Whereof I see black ~~dark~~ outcomes! Do I this
"Or do I that, success, that ~~which~~ loves to jilt
"Her anxious wooer for some careless blade,
65/7 "Will not reward me. For, if I must penit,
"Demoralized past hope is the marine —
"Bad masts, bad sails, bad officers, bad men;
"We cling to naval technics long outworn,
"And time & opportunity do not avail me
"To take up new. I have long suspected such,
"But till I saw my helps, the Spanish ships,
"I hoped somewhat. — Brest is my nominal port;
"Yet if so, Calder will again attack ~~me~~ —
"~~This time~~ Now reinforced by Nelson or Cornwallis —
"And shatter my whole fleet. ... Shall I admit
"That my true inclination & desire
"Is to make Cadiz straightway, & not Brest?
"Alas; thereby I fail the Emperor;
"But shame the navy less. ¶ Your friend, Villeneuve."

General Lauriston enters.

Lauriston.

Admiral, my missive to the Emperor,

Which I shall speed by special courier
From Ferrol this near eve, runs thus & thus: —
"Gravina's ships, in Ferrol here at hand
"Detained but by a temporary wind,
"Are all we now await. Combined with these
"We sail herefrom to Brest; there promptly give
"Cornwallis battle, & release Ganteaume;
"Thence, all united, bearing Channel-wards;
"A step that sets in motion the first wheel
"In the proud project of your majesty
"Now to be worked out to the very close,
"To wit: that a French fleet shall enter in
"And hold the Channel four-&-twenty hours." —
Such clear assurance to the Emperor
That our intent is modelled on his will
I hasten to dispatch to him forthwith. ✱

Villeneuve.

Yes, Lauriston. I sign to every word.

✱ [footnote] Through this tangle of intentions the writer has in the main followed Thiers, whose access to documents would seem to authenticate his details of the famous scheme for England's ruin.

Lauriston goes out. Villeneuve remains at his table in reverie.

Spirit of the Years.

We may impress him by a visible symbol
That seems to shed a silent influence;
He's such an one as can be so impressed,
And this much is among our privileges,
Well bounded ~~bounden~~ as they be. — Draw ~~Come~~ with me near him ~~Him~~.

The Spirits of the Years & of the Pities take the form of white sea-birds, which alight on the stern-balcony of Villeneuve's ship, immediately outside his cabin window. Villeneuve after a while lifts his eyes & sees the birds.

Villeneuve.

My apprehensions even outstep their cause,
As though some influence smote from yonder sky.

A pause.

—Why dared I not disclose to him my thought,
As ~~As~~ nightly worded by the whistling shrouds,
That Brest will never see our battle-line~~s~~
Bearing to west & north ~~their~~ in ~~[illegible]~~ portholed pride
To take the stiffness from the Englishry!
—If so it were, now, that I'd screen my skin
From risks of bloody business in this broil,
My acts could scarcely wear a difference.
Yet I would die to-morrow—not ungladly—
So far removed is carcase-care from me.—
'Tis for no self these apprehensions spring,
But for the cause.—Yes, rotten is our marine,
Which, while I know, the Emperor knows not,
And the pale secret chills. Though some there be
Would risk contingencies & hazard all,
I'll not command a course so conscienceless.
Rather I'll stand, & face Napoléon's rage
When he shall learn what mean the ambiguous words
That facts have forced from me.

Spirit of the Pities (to the Spirit of the Years)

O Eldest-born of the Unconscious Will –
If such thou beest, as I can fancy thee –
Why dost thou rack him thus? Consistency
Might be preserved, & yet his doom remain.
His olden bravery is without reproach;
'Tis but his temper to be gainsgiving.

Spirit of the Years.

I say as I have said long heretofore,
I know but narrow freedom. Feel'st thou not
We are in Its hand, as he? – Here, as elsewhere,
We do but as we may; no further dare.

The birds disappear, & the scene closes.

Scene III.

The camp & Harbour of Boulogne. The English coast in the distance. Near the Tour d'Ordre stands a hut, with sentinels & aides outside, Napoleon's temporary lodging when not at his headquarters at the Château of Pont-de-Briques, two miles inland.

Dumb Show.

A courier arrives with dispatches, & enters the Emperor's quarters, whence he emerges & goes on with other dispatches to the hut of Decrès lower down. Napoléon comes out from his hut with a paper in his hand, & musingly ~~advan~~ proceeds toward an eminence commanding the sea.

Along the shore below are forming in a far-reaching line more than a hundred thousand infantry. On the downs in the rear of the camps ~~are drawn up~~ are manoeuvring fifteen thousand cavalry, their accoutrements flashing in the sun like a school of mackerel. The flotilla ~~itself~~ lies in & around the port, ~~is~~ alive with moving figures.

¶ With his head forward & his hands behind him the Emperor surveys these animated proceedings in detail, but more frequently turns his face towards the telegraph on the cliff to the southwest, erected to signal when Villeneuve & the combined squadrons are visible on the west horizon.

He summons one of the aides, who descends to the hut of Decrès. Decrès comes out from his hut, & hastens to join the Emperor. Dumb show ends. ~~the foreground of the scene.~~

[White line]

Napoléon & Decrès advance to the foreground of the scene.

Napoléon.

Decrès, this action with Sir Robert Calder
Three weeks ago, whereof we dimly heard,
And clear details of which I have just obtained,
Is on the whole auspicious for our plan.

It seems that twenty of our ships & Spain's —
None over eighty-gunned, & some far less —
Engaged the English off Cape Finisterre
With fifteen vessels of a hundred each.
We coolly fought & orderly as they,
And, but for mist, we had closed with victory.
Two English were much hit, some Spanish damaged,
And Calder then drew off with his two wrecks
And Spain's in tow, we giving chase forthwith.
Not overtaking him our admiral,
Having the coast clear for his purposes,
Entered Corunna, & found orders there
To open the port of Brest & come on hither.
Thus nears the moment when the double fleet
Of Villeneuve & of Ganteaume should appear.
(*He looks again towards the telegraph.*)

Decrès (*with hesitation*)

And should they not appear, your majesty?

Napoléon.

Not? But they will; & do it early, too!
There's nought to hinder them. My God, they must,
For I have much before me when this stroke
At England's dealt. I learn from Talleyrand

That Austrian preparations threaten hot,
While Russia's hostile schemes are ripening,
And shortly must be met. — My plan is fixed:
I am prepared for each alternative.
If Villeneuve come, I brave the British coast,
Convulse the land with fear ('tis even now
So far distraught that generals cast about
To find new modes of warfare; yea, design
Carriages to transport their infantry!)
Once on the English soil I hold it firm,
Descend on London, & the while my men
Salute the Dome of Paul's I cut the knot
Of all ~~their~~ Pitt's coalitions; & set free
From bondage to an aristocracy
A people who await it.

<u>They stand & regard the chalky cliffs of England, till Napoléon resumes:</u>

Should it be
Even that my admirals fail to keep the tryst —
A thing scarce thinkable, when all's reviewed —
I strike this seaside camp, cross Germany
With there two hundred thousand seasoned men,
And pause not till within Vienna's walls
I cry checkmate. Next, Venice, too, being taken,
And Austria's other holdings down that way,

The Bourbons also driven from Italy,
I strike at Russia — each in turn, you see,
Ere they can act ~~together~~ conjoined.
Report to me
What has been scanned to-day upon the sea,
And on your passage down request them there
To send Daru this way.

Decrès ~~(aside)~~ (as he withdraws)
The Emperor can be sanguine. Scarce can I.
His ~~tidin~~ letters are more promising than mine
Alas, alas, Villeneuve, my dear old friend,
Why do you pen me this at such a time!

He retires reading a letter.

The Emperor walks up & down till Daru his private secretary joins him.

Napoléon.

Come quick, Daru; sit down upon the grass,
And write whilst I am in mind.
First to Villeneuve: —
" I trust, vice-admiral, that before this date
" Your fleet has opened Brest; & gone. If not

"These lines will reach you there. But pause not, pray:
"Waste not a moment dallying. Sail away:
"Once bring my coupled squadrons Channel-wards
"And England's soil is ours. All's ready here,
"The troops alert, & every store embarked.
"Hold the nigh sea but four-&-twenty hours
"And our vast end is gained."

Now to Ganteaume:—

"My telegraphs will have made known to you
"My object & ~~intent~~ desire to be but this,
"That you forbid Villeneuve to lose an hour
"In getting fit & putting forth to sea,
"To profit by the fifty first-rate craft
"Wherewith I now am bettered. Quickly weigh,
"And, ~~to~~ steer you for the Channel ~~steer~~ with all your strength.
"I count upon your well-known character,
"Your enterprize, your vigour, to do this.
"Sail hither, then; & we will be avenged
"For centuries of despite & ~~[illegible]~~ contumely."

<u>Daru.</u>

Shall a fair transcript, sire, be made forthwith?

<u>Napoléon</u>

This moment. And the courier will depart
And travel without pause.

Daru goes to his office a little lower down, & the Emperor lingers on the cliffs looking through his glass.

The point of view ~~recedes~~ shifts across the Channel, & the Boulogne cliffs shrinking to a streak.

Scene IV.

South Wessex. An open down near the coast, with a wide view over the English Channel in front, including ~~Portland~~ the Isle of Slingers & its roadstead, where men-of-war & frigates are anchored. The hour is ten in the morning, & the sun shines upon a large military encampment round about the foreground, & the grass-bents shaking in the breeze.

Artillery, cavalry, & infantry, English & Hanoverian, are drawn up for review under the Duke of Cumberland & officers of the staff, forming a vast military array, which extends three miles, & as far as the downs are visible. The turf behind the saluting-base is crowded with carriages & spectators on foot. In the centre by the Royal Standard appears King George on horseback, & his suite. In a coach drawn by six cream-coloured Hanoverian horses Queen Charlotte sits with three Princesses; in another carriage with four horses are two more Princesses. There are also present with the Royal Party the Lord Chancellor, Lord Mulgrave, Count Munster, & many other luminaries

of ~~[illegible]~~ fashion & influence.

The Review proceeds in dumb-show; & the din of many bands mingles with the cheers.

A spectator.

And you've come to see the sight, like myself? Well, one fool makes many. What a mampus o' folk ~~tis~~ it is here to-day! And what a time we do live in, between wars & wassailings, the ghost o' Boney, & King George in flesh & blood!

Second Spectator

Yes. I wonder King George is let venture down on this coast, where he might be snapped up ~~at a~~ in a moment like a minnow by a her'n, so near as we be to the ~~[illegible]~~ field of Boney's vagaries! Begad, he's as like to land here as anywhere. Gloucester Lodge could be surrounded, & George & Charlotte carried off before he could put on his hat, or she her red cloak & pattens.

Third Spectator

'Twould be no such joke to kidnap 'em as you think. Look at the frigates down there. Every night they are drawn up in a line across the front of the Bay, almost touching each other; & ashore a double line of sentinels, well primed with beer & ammunition, one at the water's edge, & the other on the Esplanade, stretch along the whole front. Then close to the Lodge a guard is

mounted after eight o'clock: there be pickets on all the hills; at the Harbour mouth is a battery of twenty four pounders; & overright a dozen six pounders, & several howitzers. And next look at the size of the camp of horse & foot up here.

First spectator.

Everybody however was fairly gallied this week when the King went out yachting, meaning to be back for the theatre: & the time passed, & it got dark, & the play couldn't begin, & eight or nine o'clock came, & never a sign of him. I don't know when 'a got back; but 'twas said by all that it was a foolhardy pleasure to take.

Fourth Spectator

He's a very obstinate & comical old gentleman; & by all account 'a wouldn't make port when asked to.

Second spectator

Lard, Lard, if 'a were nabbed, it wouldn't make a deal of difference! We should have nobody to zing to, & play single-stick to, & grin at through horsecollars, that's true. And nobody to sign our few documents. But we should rub along some way, goodnow.

First Spectator

Step up on this barrow; you can see better. The lines now passing are the York Hussars – foreigners except the officers to a man – the same

regiment the two young Germans belonged to who were shot here four years ago. Now come the Light Dragoons; what a time they take to get all past. See, the King turns to speak to one of his notables. Well, well! This day will be recorded in history.

~~H. Wallace~~ ~~[illegible]~~

Second Spectator

Or another soon to follow it! (He gazes over the Channel.) There's not a speck of an enemy upon that shiny water yet; but the Brest fleet is said to have put to sea, to act in concert with the army crossing from Boulogne; & if so the French will soon be here; when God save us all! I've took to drinking neat, for, says I, one may as well have his innerds burnt out as shot out, & 'tis a good deal pleasanter for the man that owns 'em. They say that a cannon ball knocked poor Jim Popple's maw right up into the futtock-shrouds at the Nile, where 'a hung like a night-cap out to dry. Much good to him his obeying his old mother's wish & refusing his allowance o' rum!

The bands play & the review continues till past eleven o'clock. Then follows a sham fight. At noon precisely the royal carriages draw off the ground into the highway that leads down the hill towards Gloucester Lodge, followed by other equipages in such numbers that the road is blocked. A multitude comes after on foot. Presently the vehicles manage to proceed to the watering place, & the troops march away to the various camps as a sea-mist cloaks the scene.

Scene V.

South Wessex. Rainbarrow's Beacon, Egdon Heath.

Night in mid-August. A lofty ridge of heathland reveals itself dimly, terminating in an abrupt slope, at the summit of which are three tumuli. On the sheltered side of the most prominent of these stands a hut of turves with a brick chimney. In front are two ricks of fuel, one of ~~wood, the other of~~ heather & furze for quick ignition, the other of wood, for slow burning. Something in the feel of the air & in the personality of the spot imparts a sense of uninterrupted space around, the view by day extending from the cliffs of the Isle of Wight eastward to Blackdon Hill by Deadman's Bay westward, & south across the Valley of the Froom to the ridge that screens the Channel.

Two old men with pikes are on ~~sentry~~ duty as beacon-keepers beside the ricks.

First old man.

Now Jems Purchess, once more mark my words. Black'on is the point we've to watch, & not Kingsbere; & I'll tell 'ee for why. If he do land anywhere hereabout 'twill be inside Deadman's Bay, & the signel will straightway come from Black'on. But there thou'st a stand, glowing & staring with all thy eyes at Kingsbere! I tell 'ee what 'tis, Jems Purchess, your brain is softening; & you be getting too old for business o' state like ours!

Second old man.

You've let your tongue wrack your few rames of good breeding, John. ¶ First old man ¶ The words of my Lord Lieutenant was, when-ever you see Kingsbere-Hill Beacon fired to the eastward, or Black'on to the westward, light up; & keep your second fire burning for two hours. Was that our documents or was it not?

Second ~~First~~ old man.

I don't gainsay it. And so I keep my eye on Kingsbere ~~Black'on~~, because that's most likely o' the two, says I.

First ~~Second~~ old man.

That shows the curious depths of your ignorance. Didst ever larn geography?

Second ~~First~~ old man.

No. Nor no other corrupt practices.

First ~~Second~~ old man.

Tcht-tcht! - Well, I'll have patience, & put it to him in another form. Dost know the world is round - eh? I warrant dostn't!

Second ~~First~~ old man

I warrant I do!

First ~~Second~~ old man.

How d'ye make that out, when th'st never been to school?

Second ~~First~~ old man.

I larned it at church, thank God.

First ~~Second~~ old man

Church? (Beware what you be saying, Jems Purchess! ~~John Whiting~~) What have God A'mighty got to do with the shape o' the world?)

Second ~~First~~ old man.

I say I did, whether or no. 'Twas the zingers up in gallery that I had it from. They busted out that strong with "the round world & they that dwell therein," that we common fokes down under could do no less than believe 'em.

First ~~Second~~ old man.

Canst be sharp enough in the wrong place as usual — I warrant canst! However, I'll have patience with en! — Suppose, now, my hat is the world; & there, as might be, stands the Camp of Belong where Boney is. The world goes round, so, & Belong goes round too. Twelve hours pass; round goes the world still — so. Where's Belong now? 81 G

A pause. Two other figures, a man's & a woman's, rise against the sky out of the gloom.

First old man (shouldering his pike)

Who goes there? Friend or foe, in the King's name!

Woman.

Piece o' trumpery! "Who goes" yourself! What d'ye talk o', John Whiting! Can't your eyes earn their living any longer, then, that you don't know your own neighbours? 'Tis Private Cantle of the Locals & his wife Keziar, down at Bloom's-End — who else should it be!

First old man (lowering his pike)

A form o' words, mis'ess Cantle, no more; ordained by his Majesty's Gover'ment to be spoke by all we on sworn duty for the defence o' the country. Strict watch & ward is our only form of salvation in these times. — But, my dear 'ooman, why ever have ye come lumpering up to Rainbarrow at this time o' night?

Woman.

We've been troubled wi' bad dreams, owing to the firing out at sea yesterday; & at last I could sleep no more, feeling sure that sommat boded of His coming. And I said to Cantle, I'll raise myself, & go up to Beacon, & ask if anything have been heard or seen to-night. And here we be.

First old man.

Not a sign or sound — all's as still as a churchyard. And how is your good man?

Private

Clk! I be all right! I was in the ranks, helping to keep the ground at the review by the King this week. We was a wonderful sight — wonderful! The King said so again & again. — Yes, there was he, & there was I, though naturally not daring to move an eyebrow in the presence of Majesty. — I have come home on a night's leave — off there again to-morrow. Boney's expected every day, thank God! Yes, our hopes are to be fulfilled soon, as we say in the army.

First old man.

There there, Cantle; don't ye speak quite so large, & stand so over-upright. Your back is as holler as a firedog's. Do ye suppose that we on active service here don't know war news? Mind you don't go taking to your heels when the next alarm comes, as you did at last year's.

Private

That had nothing to do with fighting, for I'm as bold as a lion when I'm up! 'Twas — (lowering his voice.) Have ye heard?

First old man

To be sure we have.

Private.

Ghastly, isn't it!

First old man

Ghastly 'tis! Frightful! ~~Horrible!~~

Second old man (to Private)

He don't know what it is! That's his pride & puffery. What is it that's so ghastly — hey?

Private

Well, there, I can't tell it. 'Twas that that made the whole eighty of our company run away — though we be the bravest of the brave in natural jeopardies, or the little boys wouldn't run after us & call us the "Bang-up-Locals".

Woman (in undertones)

I can tell'ee a word or two on't. It is about His victuals. They say that He lives upon human flesh, & has rashers o' baby every morning for breakfast — for all the world like the Cernel giant in old ancient times!

Second old man.

Ye can't believe all ye hear.

Private.

I only believe half. And I only own — such is my challengeful character — that perhaps He do eat pagan infants when He's in the desert. But not Christian ones at home. O no — 'tis too much!

Woman.

Whether or no, I sometimes — God forgie me! — laugh wi' horror

at the queerness o't, till I am that weak I can hardly go round house. He should have the washing of'em a few times: I warrant 'a would'nt want to eat babies any more!

A silence, during which they gaze around at the expanse of starless sky.

R Johnston
J McFarlane Second Old Man.

There'll be a change in the weather soon, by the look o't. I can hear the cows moo in Froom Valley as if I were close to'em, & the lantern at Max Turnpike is shining quite plain. ¶ First Old Man. Well, come in & taste a drop o' sommat we've got here, that will warm the cockles of your heart as ye wamble homealong. We housed eighty tubs here last night for them that shan't be named — landed in Lullwind ~~Bay~~ Cove the night afore, though they had a narrow shave with the riding-officers this run.

They make towards the hut, when a light ~~to~~ on the west horizon becomes visible, & quickly enlarges.

Second ~~First~~ Old Man.

He's come!

First ~~Second~~ Old Man.

Come he is, though you do say it! This, then, is the beginning of what England's waited for!

Second ~~First~~ Old man.

Just what you was thanking God for by-now, Private Cantle.

Private.

My meaning was—

Woman (simpering)

O that I hadn't married a fiery sojer, to make me bring fatherless children into the world ~~at~~ any moment, all through his dreadful calling! Why didn't a man of no glory content me! I feel all over as if I were living in Jeremiah!

First old man (shouldering his pike)

We can't heed your innocent pratings any longer, good neighbours, being in the King's service, & a hot invasion on! Fall in, fall in, mate. Straight to the tinderbox. Quick march!

The old men hasten to the hut, & are heard striking a flint & steel. Returning with a lit lantern they ignite a ~~wi~~ wisp of furze, & with this set the first stack ~~of~~ fuel in a blaze. The private of the Locals & his wife hastily retreat by the light of the flaming beacon, under which the purple rotundities of the heath show like bronze, & the pits like the ~~deep~~ eyesockets of a skull.

Spirit Sinister

This is good, & spells blood. (To the Chorus of the Years) I assume

that It means to let us carry out this invasion with pleasing slaughter, so as not to disappoint my hope?

Semichorus I of the Years (aerial music)

We carry out? Nay, but should we
Ordain what slaughters are to be!

Semichorus II.

The Immanent, that urgeth all,
Rules what may or may not befall.

Semichorus I.

Ere systemed suns were globed & lit
The slaughters of ~~each~~ the race were writ,

Semichorus II.

And wasting wars, by land & sea,
Fixed, like all else, immutably!

Spirit Sinister

Well; be it so. My argument is that War makes rattling good history; but peace is poor reading. So I want war for the reason that it gives pleasure to posterity.

Spirit of the Pities.

~~Poor~~ Flimsy hypocrite!

Chorus of the Years.

We apprehend him not.

The day breaks over the heathery upland, on which the beacon is still burning. The morning reveals the white surface of a highway which, coming from ~~the shore & port~~ King George's wateringplace beyond the hills, stretches towards the outskirts of the heath & passes away eastward.

Dumb Show.

Moving figures & vehicles dot the surface of the road, all progressing in one direction, away from the coast. In the foreground the shapes appear as those of civilians, mostly on foot, but many in gigs & tradesmen's carts & on horseback. When they reach an intermediate hill some pause & look back; others enter on the next decline landwards without turning their heads.

From the opposite horizon numerous companies of volunteers, in the local uniform of red with green facings, are moving coastwards in companies; as are also irregular bodies of pikemen without uniform; while on the upper slopes of the downs towards the shore regiments of the line are visible, with cavalry & artillery; all passing over to the coast.

At a signal from the chief Intelligences two phantom-messengers enter on the highway in the garb of countrymen.

First Phantom (to Pedestrians)

Whither so fast, good neighbours, & before breakfast, too? Empty

bellies be bad to vamp on.

First Pedestrian (laden with a pack, & speaking breathlessly)

He's landed west'ard, out by Abbot's Beach. And if you have property you'll save it & yourselves, as we are doing!

Second Pedestrian.

All yesterday the firing at Boulogne
Was like the seven thunders heard in Heaven
When the fierce angel spoke! So did he draw
~~All~~ Men's eyes that way, the while his thousand boats
Full-manned, flat-bottomed for the shallowest shore,
Dropped down to west, & crossed our frontage here.
Seen from above they specked the water-shine
As will a flight of swallows towards dim eve,
Descending on a ~~smooth flag~~ smooth & loitering stream
To seek some eyot's sedge.

Second Phantom.

We are sent to enlighten you & ease your souls.
Even now a courier canters to the port
To check the baseless scare.

First Pedestrian (to Second Pedestrian.)

These be inland men who, I warrant 'ee, don't know a lerret from a lugger? Let's take no heed of such, comrade; & hurry on!

First Phantom.

Will you not hear

That what was seen behind the midnight mist,
~~All eased, & dropping~~ Their oarblades tossing twinkles to the moon,
Was but a fleet of fishing-craft belated
By reason of the vastness of their haul?

First Pedestrian.

Hey? And d'ye know it? – Now I look back to the top o' Ridgeway the folk do seem as come to a pause there. – Be this true, never again do I stir my stumps for any alarm short of the Day of Judgment! Nine times has my scanty rheumatical rest been broke in these last three years by hues & crys of Boney upon us. ~~And~~ 'Od rot the feller; now he's made a fool of me once more, till my inside is like a washtub, what wi' being so gallied, & running so leery! – But what if you be one of the enemy, sent to sow these tares, so to speak it, these false tidings, & coax us into a fancied safety? Hey, neighbours? I don't, after all, care for this story!

Second Pedestrian

Onwards again!
If Boney's come, 'tis best to be away;
And if he's not, why, we've a holiday!

Exeunt Pedestrians.

The scene ~~appears~~ seems to become involved in the smoke from the beacon, & slowly disappears.

I ~~Dr. Parlame~~ I Burrup kan

Act Third.

Scene I.

Boulogne. The interior of the Château at Pont-de-Briques, the Imperial headquarters.

The Emperor Napoléon seated at breakfast with M. Gaspard Monge, the mathematician & philosopher.

Enter the officer in attendance.

Officer.

Monsieur the Admiral Decrès awaits
A moment's audience with your Majesty,
Or now, or later.

Napoléon.

Bid him come in at once —
At last Villeneuve has raised the Brest blockade!

Enter Decrès.

What of the squadrons' movements, good Decrès?

Brest opened, & all sailing Channelwards,
Like swans into a creek at feeding-time?

Decrès.

Such news was what I'd hoped, your Majesty,
To send across this daybreak. But events
Have proved intractable, it seems, of late:
And hence I haste in person to report
The featless facts that just have ~~broke on~~ dashed me —

Napoléon (darkening)

Well?

Decrès.

Sire, at the very ~~time~~ juncture when the fleets
Sailed out from Ferrol, fever raged aboard
L'Achille & l'Algesiras: later on,
Mischief assailed our Spanish comrades' ships;
Several ran foul of neighbours; whose new hurts,
Being added to their innate clumsiness,
Gave hap the upper hand; & in quick course
Demoralized the whole. Until Villeneuve,
Judging that Calder now with Nelson rode,
And prescient of unparalleled disaster
If he pushed on in so disjoint a train,

Bowed to the inevitable; & thus, perforce,
Leaving to other opportunity
Brest & the Channel scheme, with vast regret
Steered southward into Cadiz.

<u>Napoléon</u> (<u>having risen from the table</u>)
What! – Is, then,
My scheme of years to be disdained & dashed
By one like him, a wretched moral coward,
Whom you must needs foist on me as one fit
For full command in pregnant enterprise!

<u>Monge</u> (<u>aside</u>)
I'm one too many here! Let me step out
Till this black squall blows over. Poor Decrès.
Would that this precious project, disinterred
From naval archives of King Louis' reign
~~And having for true parent, if 'twere known~~,
Had ever lingered fusting where 'twas found! ⁂
<u>Exit</u> <u>Monge</u>.

<u>Napoléon</u>.
To help a friend you foul a country's fame! –

[foot note] ⁂ "Le projet existe encore aux archives de la marine que Napoléon consultait incessament: il sentait que cette marine depuis Louis XIV avait fait de grandes choses: le plan de l'Expédition d'Egypte et de la descente en Angleterre se trouvaient au ministère de la marine." – <u>Capefigue</u>: <u>L'Europe pendant le Consulat et l'Empire</u>.

Decrès, not only chose you this Villeneuve,
But you have nourished secret-sore opinions
Akin to his, & ~~thus have~~ thereby helped to scathe,
As stably based a project as this age
Has seen matured. Ever the French marine
Have you decried, ever contrived to bring
Despair into the fleet! Why, this Villeneuve,
Your man, this rank incompetent, this traitor —
Of whom I asked no more than fight & lose,
Provided he detained the enemy —
A frigate is too ~~good~~ great for his command!
What shall be said of one who, at a breath,
When a few casual sailors find them sick,
When falls a broken bowspit or rent sail,
When rumour hints that Calder's tubs and Nelson's ~~in~~
~~Their tubs~~ May join, & bob about in company,
Is straightway paralyzed, & doubles back
On all his ripened plans! —
Bring him by bodily duress out from Cadiz,
Compel him up the Channel by main force,
And, having doffed him ~~of~~ his supreme command,
Give the united squadrons to Ganteaume!

Decrès

Your majesty, while dwelling on the event

With just concern that I have pain to tell,
Makes my hard situation over-hard
By your ascription to the actors in't
Of motives such & such. 'Tis not for me
To answer these reproaches, sire, & ask
Why years-long mindfulness of France's weal
In things marine should win no confidence.
I speak; but am unable to convince!
True is it that this man has been my friend
Since boyhood made us schoolmates; & I say
That he would yield the heeltaps of his ~~blood~~ veins
With joyful readiness this day, this hour,
To do his country service. Yet no less
Is it his ~~misfortune~~ drawback that he sees too far.
And there are times, sire, when a shorter sight
Charms Fortune more. A certain sort of bravery
Some people have — to wit, this same Lord Nelson —
Which is but fatuous faith in one's own star
Swoln to the very verge of childishness,
(Smugly disguised as putting trust in God,
A habit with these English folk); whereby
A headstrong blindness to contingencies
Carries the actor on, & serves him well
In some nice issues clearer sight would mar.
Such eyeless bravery Villeneuve has not;
But, sire, he is no coward.

I Bringstone
L. McKenzie

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Napoléon.

Well, have it so! – What are we going to do?
My brain has only one wish – to succeed.

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Decrès.

My voice wanes weaker with you, sire: is nought!
Yet these few words, as Minister of Marine,
I'll venture now. – My process would be this: –
Our projects for a junction of the fleets
Being ~~read &~~ well-discerned & read by every eye
Through long delay, the English are prepared.
I would recast them. Later in the year
Make several squadrons of this massive one,
Harass the English till the wintertime,
Then rendezvous at Cadiz; where leave half
To catch the enemy's eye & call their cruizers,
While with the other half you wheel round Scotland;
Thence to the Channel by the eastern strait,
Cover the passage of our army-boats,
And plant the blow.

Napoléon.

And what if they perceive
Our Scottish route, & meet us eastwardly?

Decrès.

I have thought of it, & planned a countermove;
I'll write the scheme more clearly & at length,
And send it hither to your Majesty.

Napoléon.

Do so forthwith; & send me in Daru.

Exit Decrès. Re-enter Monge.

Our breakfast, Monge, to-day has been cut short,
And those discussions on the ancient tongues
Wherein you shine, must yield to modern moils.
Nay, hasten not away; though feeble wills,
Incompetence, ay, imbecility,
In some who feign to serve the cause of France,
Do make me other than myself just now! —
Ah — here's Daru.

Daru enters. Monge takes his leave.

Daru, sit down & write. Yes, here, at once,
This room will serve me now. What think you, eh?
Villeneuve has just turned tail & run to Cadiz, ~~overthrown~~
~~My long-conned project~~ So quite postponed — perhaps even overthrown —
My long-conned project against yonder shore
As 'twere a juvenile's snow-built device

But made for melting! Think of it, Daru, —
My God, my God, how can I talk thereon!
A plan well judged, well charted, well upreared,
To end in nothing!..... Sit you down & write.

<u>Napoléon walks up & down, & resumes after a silence</u>:

Write this. — A voltface ~~This~~ 'tis indeed! — Write, write!

<u>Daru</u>.

I wait, your Majesty.

<u>Napoléon</u>.

First Bernadotte —
Yes; "Bernadotte is to move from Hanover
"Through Hesse upon Würzburg & the Danube. —
"Marmont from Holland bears along the Rhine,
"And joins at Mainz & Würzburg Bernadotte......
"While these prepare their routes the army here
"Will turn its back on Britain's tedious shore,
"And, closing up with Augereau at Brest,
"Set out full force due eastward.
"By the Black Forest feign a straight attack,
"The while our purpose is to skirt its left,
"Meet in Franconia Bernadotte & Marmont;

"Traverse the Danube somewhat down from Ulm;
"Entrap the Austrian columns by their rear;
"Surround them, take them; march upon Vienna,
"Where, Austria settled, I engage the Tsar,
"While Masséna detains in Italy
"The Archduke Charles.
"Foreseeing such might shape
"Each high- & byway to the Danube hence
"I have of late had measured, mapped, & judged;
"Such spots as suit for depôts chosen & marked;
"Each regiment's daily mileage & bivouac
"Writ tablewise for ready reference;
"All which itineraries are sent herewith."
So shall I crush the two gigantic sets
Upon the Empire, now grown imminent.
— Let me reflect. — First Bernadotte — But nay,
The courier to Marmont must go first.
Well, well. — The order of our march from hence
I will advise ..... My knock at George's door
With bland inquiries why his royal hand
Withheld due answer to my friendly lines,
And tossed the irksome business to his clerks,
Is thus perforce delayed. But not for long.
Instead of crossing, thitherward I go
By roundabout-contrivance not less sure!

Daru.

I'll bring the writing to your majesty.

Napoléon & Daru go out severally.

Chorus of the Years (aerial music)

Recording Angel, trace

This bold campaign his thought has spun apace —

~~'Tis~~ One that bids fair for immortality

Among the earthlings — if immortal deeds

May be ascribed to so extemporary

And transient a race!

It will be called, in rhetoric & rhyme,

As son to sire succeeds,

A model for the tactics of all time;

"The Great Campaign of Eighteen-hundred-five"

By millions of mankind not yet alive.

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L. Dr Klenze
M. Reid

Scene II.

The Frontiers of Upper Austria & Bavaria. A view of the country from mid-air, at a point south of the River Inn, which is seen as a silver thread, winding northward between its junction with the Salza & the Danube, & forming the boundaries of the two countries. The Danube shows itself as a shining crinkled satin riband, stretching from left to right in the far background of the picture, the Inn discharging its waters into the larger river.

Dumb Show.

The Austrian army, creeping noiselessly along the foreground, in the form of detached masses & columns of a whitish cast. The columns insensibly draw nearer to each other, & are seen to be converging from the east upon the banks of the Inn aforesaid.

A Recording Angel (in recitative.)

This movement as of molluscs on a leaf,
Which from our vantage here we scan afar,
Is one conducted by the famous Mack
To circumvent Napoléon, still believed
To be intent on England from Boulogne,
And heedless of such doings in his rear.
Mack's enterprize is now to cross Bavaria —

Beneath us stretched in ripening summer peace
As ~~scene~~ field unwonted for these ugly broils —
And seize on Ulm, past Swabia leftward there.
Outraged Bavaria, simmering in disquiet
At Munich down behind us, Isar-fringed,
And torn between his fair wife's hate of France
And his own itch to gird at Austrian bluff
For riding roughshod through his territory,
Wavers from this to that. The while Time hastes
The eastward streaming of Napoléon's host,
As soon we see.

The silent insect-creep of the Austrian columns towards the banks of the Inn continues to be seen till the view fades to nebulousness & dissolves.

Scene III.

Boulogne. A morning at the end of August. The St. Omer road stretching out of the town eastward.

The divisions of the "Army-for-England" are making preparations to march. Some portions are in marching order. Bands strike up, & the regiments start on their journey towards

the Rhine & Danube. Bonaparte & his officers watch the movements from an eminence. The soldiers as they pace along under their eagles with beaming eyes, sing "Le Chant du Départ," & other martial songs, shout "Long live the Emperor", & babble of repeating the days of Italy, Egypt, Marengo, & Hohenlinden.

Napoléon.

To England afterwards!

Chorus of Intelligences. (aerial music)

As it may be!

The scene as it lingers exhibits the gradual diminishing of the troops along the roads through the undulating August landscape, & the disappearance of each mass over the eastern horizon.

Act Fourth.

Scene I.

~~South Wessex~~. King George's South Wessex, watering-place, for a sunny day in autumn. A room in ~~King George's~~ the red brick royal residence known as Gloucester Lodge.*

At a front triple-lighted window stands a telescope on a tripod. Through the open middle sash is visible the crescent-curved expanse of the Bay as a sheet of brilliant translucent green, on which ride vessels of war at anchor. On the left hand white cliffs stretch away till they culminate in St Aldhelm's Head, & form a background to the level water line on that side. In the centre ~~is~~ are the open sea & blue sky. A near headland rises on the right, surmounted by a battery, over which the remoter bald grey brow appears of the Isle of Slingers.

In the foreground spread smooth yellow sands, whereon there are sundry temporary erections for athletic sports; & closelier runs an Esplanade on which a fashionable crowd is promenading. Immediately outside the Lodge are companies of soldiers,

[foot note] * This weatherbeaten old building, though now an hotel, is but little altered.

groups of officers, & sentries.

[White line]

Within the room the King & Pitt are discovered. The King's eyes show traces of recent inflammation, & ~~Pitt~~ the minister has an exhausted look.

King.

Yes, yes: I grasp your reasons, Mr Pitt,
And grant you audience gladly. More than that,
Your visit to this shore is apt & timely,
And if it do but yield you needful rest
From councils, parles, & other strains of office,
Which you & I in common have to bear,
'Twill be well earned. The bathing is unmatched
Elsewhere in Europe, — see its mark on me! —
The air like liquid life. — But of this matter:
What argue these late movements seen abroad?
What of the country now the session's past;
What of the country, eh? & of the war?

Pitt.

The thoughts I lay before your majesty
Would make for this, in sum: —
That Mr Fox, Lord Grenville, & their friends,
Be straightway asked to join. With Melville gone,

With Sidmouth, & with Buckinghamshire too,
The steerage of affairs has been of late
Somewhat provisional, as you, Sir, know,
With stopgap functions thrust on offices
Which can be tolerated but a while.
So, for the weighty reasons I have urged,
I do repeat my most respectful hope
To win your Majesty's ungrudged assent
To what I have proposed.

~~Mr Beach~~
Mr Wallace King.

But nothing, sure,
Has been ~~Could be~~ more plain to all ~~you~~, dear Mr Pitt,
~~And all men~~ Than that your own proved energy & scope
Is ample, without aid, to carry on
Our just crusade against this Corsican?
These helps we need not. Pray you think upon't,
And speak to me again. – We've had alarms
Within these few weeks past, as you may know,
That Bonaparte had landed close hereby.

Pitt.

Such rumours come as regularly as harvest.

King.

And now he has left Boulogne with all his force?

Was it his object to invade at all,
Or was his vast assemblage here a blind?

Pitt.

Undoubtedly he meant invasion, sir,
Had fortune favoured. He may try it yet.
And, as I said, could we but close with Fox—

King.

But, but;—I ask, what is his object now?
Lord Nelson's Captain—Hardy—whose old home
Stands in a peaceful vale hard by us here—
Who came two weeks ago to see his friends,
I talked to in this room a lengthy while.
He says our navy still is in the dark
As to the aims by sea of Bonaparte
Now the Boulogne attempt has fizzled out,
And what he schemes afloat with Spain combined.
The Victory lay that fortnight at Spithead,
#And Nelson since has gone aboard & sailed;
Yes, sailed again. The Royal Sovereign follows,
And others her. Nelson was ~~[illegible]~~ hailed & cheered
To huskiness while leaving Southsea shore,
Gentle & simple wildly thronging him.

Pitt.

Ay, sir. Young women hung upon his arm.

And old ones blessed, & stroked him with their hands.

King.

Ah – you have heard, of course. God speed him, Pitt.

Pitt.

Amen, amen!

King

I read it as a thing
Of signal augury, & one which bodes
Heaven's confidence in me & in my line,
That I should rule as King in such an age!...–
Well, well. – So this new march of Bonaparte's
Was unexpected, forced perchance on him?

Pitt.

It may be so, your Majesty; it may.
Last noon the Austrian ambassador,
Whom I consulted ere I posted down,
Assured me that his latest papers state
That General Mack & eighty thousand men
Have made good speed across Bavaria
To wait the French & give them check at Ulm,
That fortress-frontier-town, entrenched & walled,
A point long chosen as a vantage-ground

Whereon to encounter them as they outwind
From the blind shades & baffling green defiles
Of the Black Forest, worn with ~~their~~ wayfaring.
Here Mack will intercept his ~~[illegible]~~ agile foe
Hasting to meet the Russians in Bohemia,
And cripple him, if not annihilate.

Thus now, sir, opens out this Great Alliance
Of Russia, Austria, England, whereto I
Have lent my earnest efforts through long months,
And the realm gives her money, ships, & men. —
It claps a muffler round this Cock's steel spurs,
And leaves me sanguine on his overthrow.
But then, — this coalition of resources
Demands a strong & active Cabinet
To aid your Majesty's directive hand;
And thus I urge again the said additions. —
These brilliant intellects of the other side
Who stand by Fox. With us conjoined, ~~all~~ they —

King

What, what, again — in face of my sound reasons!
Believe me, Pitt, you underrate yourself;
You do not need such aid. The splendid feat
Of banding Europe in a righteous cause
That you have achieved, so soon to put to shame

This wicked bombardier of dynasties
That rule by right Divine, goes straight to prove
We had best continue as we have begun,
And call no partners to our management.
To speak of difficulties that loom ahead
Is not your wont. Nay, nay, now, Mr Pitt,
I must be firm. And if you love your King
You'll goad him not so rashly to embrace
This Fox-&-Grenville faction & its friends.
Rather than Fox, why, give me civil war!
Hey, what? But what besides?

Pitt.

I say besides, Sir, nothing.

A silence.

King

The Chancellor's here, & many friends of mine; [Lady Winchelsea, Lord & Lady Chesterfield, Lady Bulkeley, General Garth,] & Mr. Phipps the oculist — not the least important to me. He is a worthy & a skilful man. My eyes, he says, are as marvellously improved in durability as I know them to be in ~~sight~~ power. I have arranged to go to-morrow with the Princesses, & the Dukes of Cumberland, Sussex, & Cambridge, who are also here, for a ride on the Ridge-way, & through the camp on the downs. You'll accompany us there?

Pitt.

I am honoured by your majesty's commands.

~~A silence.~~ Pitt looks resignedly out of the window.

What curious structure do I see outside, sir?

King.

It's but a stage, a type of all the world. The burgesses have arranged it in my honour. At six o'clock this evening there are to be combats at singlestick to amuse the folk; four guineas the prize for the man who breaks most heads. Afterwards there is to be a grinning match through horsecollars – a very humorous sport which I must stay here & witness; for I am interested in whatever entertains my subjects.

Pitt.

Not one in all the land but knows it, sir.

King.

Now, Mr Pitt, you must require repose;
Consult your own convenience quite, I beg,
On when you will retire.

Pitt.

I thank your majesty.

He departs as one whose purpose has failed.

Mr Wallace — Mr Steven (118)

Scene II.

Before the city of Ulm, on the Danube.

A ~~view~~ prospect of the city from the east, showing in the foreground a low-lying marshy country bounded in mid-distance by the banks of the Danube which, bordered by poplars & willows, flows across the picture from the left to the Elchingen Bridge near the right foreground, & is backed by irregular heights & terraces of espaliered vines. Between these & the river stands the city, crowded with old gabled houses & surrounded by walls, bastions, & a ditch, all the edifices being dominated by the nave & tower of the huge gothic Münster.

On the most prominent of the heights at the back — the Michaelsberg — to the upper-right of the view, is encamped the mass of the Austrian army, amid half-finished entrenchments. Advanced posts of the same are seen south-east of the city, not far from the advanced corps of the French Grand Army under Soult, Marmont, Murat, Lannes, Ney, & Dupont, which occupies in a semicircle the whole breadth of the flat landscape in front, & extends across the river to higher ground on the right hand of the panorama.

Heavy mixed drifts of rain & snow are descending impartially on the French & on the Austrians, the downfall nearly blotting out the latter on the hills. A chill October wind wails

across the country, & the poplars ~~wave~~ rock slantingly in the gusts.

[White line]

Dumb Show.

Drenched peasants are busily at work, fortifying the heights of the Austrian position in the face of the enemy. Vague companies of Austrians above, & of the French below, ~~blotted~~ hazy & ~~obs~~ indistinct in the thick atmosphere, come & go without apparent purpose near their respective lines. ¶ Closer at hand Napoléon, in a grey great-coat, rides hither & thither with his marshals, haranguing familiarly the bodies of soldiery as he passes them, & observing & pointing out the disposition of the Austrians to his companions.

113

I

Thicker sheets of rain fly across as the murk of evening increases, which at length entirely obscures the scene, excepting its bleared lights & fires.

Scene III.

Ulm. Within the city. The interior of the Austrian headquarters on the following morning. A tempest raging without.

General Mack, haggard & anxious, the Archduke

Ferdinand, Prince Schwarzenberg, General Jellachich, General Riese, & other field officers discovered, seated at a table with a map spread out before them. A wood fire blazes between tall andirons in a yawning fireplace. At every more than usually boisterous gust of wind the smoke flaps into the room.

Mack.

The accursèd cunning of our adversary
Confounds all codes of honourable war,
Which ever have held for granted that the track
Of armies bearing hither from the Rhine —
Whether in peace or strenuous invasion —
Should pierce the Schwarzwald, & through Memmingen,
And meet us in our front. But he must wind
And corkscrew meanly round, where foot of man
Can scarce find pathway, breaking into us
Upon our homeward side! Nevertheless,
If English war-fleets be abreast Boulogne,
As these deserters say, & ripe to land there,
It destines Bonaparte to pack him back
Across the Rhine again. We're but to wait,
And see him go.

Archduke.

But who shall say if these bright tales be true?

Mack.

Even then, small matter, your Imperial Highness.
The Russians near us daily, & must soon –
Ay, far within the eight days I have named –
Be operating to untie this knot,
If we hold on.

Archduke.

Conjectures these – no more!
I stomach not such waiting. Neither hope
Has bottom in't. I & my cavalry
With caution, when the shadows fall to-night,
Can bore some hole in this engirdlement;
Outpass the gate north-east; join General Werneck,
And somehow cut our way Bohemia-wards:
'Tis worth the risk in this our straitened case.

Mack (firmly)

The body of our force stays here with me.
Moreo'er I am much surprized, your Highness, much,
That you mark not how fatal 'tis to part.
If we wait on, for certain we should wait
In our full strength, compacted, undispersed
By such partition as your Highness plans.

Schwarzenberg

There's truth in urging we should not divide,

But well together. – Yet why stay at all?
Methinks there's but one sure salvation left.
To wit, that herefrom we compactly march,
And with much circumspection, towards the Tyrol.
The subtle often rack their wits in vain,
And con whole magazines of strategy,
To shun ill loomings deemed insuperable,
When simple souls by stumbling up thereto
Find the grim shapes but air. – But let us grant
That the investing French so ring us in
As to leave not a span for such exploit;
Then go we – throw ourselves upon their steel,
And batter through, or die.
What say you, Generals? Speak your minds, I pray.

Jellachich.

I favour marching out – the Tyrol way.

Riese.

Bohemia best! The route thereto is open..

Archduke.

My course is chosen. 'Tis a black campaign
Which Pitt's alarmed dispatches pressed on us
All unforeseeing! Any risk for me
Rather than be humiliated here!

N. Stever

L. McGlashen

<u>Mack has risen during the latter remarks, walked to the window, & looked out at the rain. He returns with an air of embarrassment.</u>

<u>Mack</u> (<u>to Archduke</u>)

It is my privilege firmly to submit
That your Imperial Highness undertake
No ~~expedition~~ venturous vaulting into risks unknown. —
Assume that you, sire, as you have ~~as you before~~ proposed,
With your light regiments & the cavalry,
Detach yourself from us, to scoop ~~force~~ a way
By circuits northwards through the Rauhe Alps
And Herdenheim, into Bohemia:
Reports all point ~~show~~ that you will be attacked,
Enveloped, borne on to capitulate.
What worse can happen here? —
Remember, sire, the Emperor deputes me,
Should such a clash arise as has arisen,
To exercise supreme authority.
~~It is~~ The honour of our arms, our race, demands
That none of your Imperial Highness line
Be pounded ~~made a~~ prisoner by this vulgar foe,
Who is not France, but an adventurer
Imposing on that country for his gain.

Archduke.

I amply recognize the drear disgrace
Involving Austria if this upstart chief
Should of his cunning seize & hold in pawn
~~One of~~ a royal lineaged son, ~~house~~ whose ancestors
Root on the primal rocks of history.

Spirit ~~Sinister~~ Ironic.

Note that. Five years, & legal brethren they—
This feudal treasure & the upstart man!

Archduke.

But it seems clear to me that loitering here
Is full as like to compass our surrender
As moving hence. And ill it therefore suits
The mood of one of my high temperature
To pause inactive while await the means
Of desperate cure for these so desperate ills!

The Archduke Ferdinand goes out.

A troubled silence follows, during which the gusts call into the chimney, & raindrops spit into the fire.

Schwarzenberg.

The Archduke bears him shrewdly in this course.
We may as well look matters in the face,

And that we are cooped & cornered is most clear;
Clear is it, too, that but a miracle
Can work to loose us! I have stoutly held
That this man's three years' ostentatious scheme
To fling his army on the tempting shores
Of our allies the English was a — well —
scarce other than a trick of thimblerig
To still us into false security.

Jellachich

Well, I know nothing. None needs list to me.
But, on the whole, to eastward seems the course
For plunging, all in force, immediately.

Another pause.

Spirit Sinister.

The Will throws Mack again in agitation;
'Tis good what he'll say now!

Spirit of the Pities.

Nay, hardone, nay;
The clouds weep for him!

Spirit Sinister.

If he must he must;
And 'tis good antic at a vacant time.

Mack goes restlessly to the door, & is heard pacing about the vestibule, & questioning the aides & other officers gathered there.

A General.

He wavers like this ~~chimney~~ smoke-wreath that inclines
Now north, now south, & as the storm-currents rule!

Mack (returning)

Bring that deserter hither once again.

A French soldier is brought in, blindfolded & guarded. The bandage is removed.

Well, tell us what he says.

An Officer (after speaking to the prisoner in French)

He still repeats
That the whole body of the British strength
Is even now descending on Boulogne,
And that self-preservation must, of need,
Clear us from Bonaparte ere many days,
Who even now is moving.

Mack.

Still retain him.

He walks to the fire. The soldier is taken out.

<u>Jellachich</u> (<u>bending over the map with Riese</u>)

I much prefer our self-won information;
And if we have Marshal Soult at Landsberg here
(Which seems to be the truth, despite this man)
And Dupont hard upon us at Albeck,
With Ney not far from Günzburg; somewhere here,
Or further down the river, lurking Lannes,
Our game's to draw off southward — if we can.

<u>Mack</u>.

I have it. This we'll do. You, Jellachich,
Unite with Spangen's troops at Memmingen,
To ~~keep~~ fend off mischief there. And you, Riese,
Will make your utmost haste to occupy
The bridge & upper ground at Elchingen,
And all along the left bank of the stream,
Till you observe whereon to concentrate
And sever their connections. I ~~stay~~ couch here,
And hold the city till the Russians come.

<u>A General</u> (<u>in a low voice</u>)

Disjunction seems of all expedients worst:
If any stay, then stay should every man,
Gather, inlace, & close them hip to hip,
And perk & bristle hedgehog-like with spines!

Mack.

The ~~consultation~~ conference is ended, friends, I say,
And orders will be issued here forthwith.

Guns heard.

An officer.

Surely that's from the Michaelsberg above us?

Mack.

Never care. Here we stay. In five more days
The Russians hail, & we regain our bays.

Exeunt severally.

L. McGlashan
J. Reid

Scene IV.

Before Ulm. The same day. A high wind prevails, & rain falls in torrents. An elevated terrace near Elchingen forms the foreground.

Dumb Show.

From the terrace Bonaparte surveys & dictates operations against the entrenched heights of the Michaelsberg that rise in the middle distance on the right above the city. Through the gauze of descending waters the French soldiery can be ~~seen~~ discerned climbing to the attack under Ney.

They slowly advance, recede, re-advance, halt. A time of suspense follows. Then they are seen in a state of irregular movement, even confusion; but in the end they carry the heights with the bayonet.

Below the spot whereon Napoleon & his staff are gathered, glistening wet & plastered with mud, obtrudes on the left the village of Elchingen, now in the hands of the French. Its white-walled monastery, its bridge over the Danube, recently broken by the enemy under Ney, wear a desolated look, & the stream, which is swollen by the rainfall & rasped by the storm, seems wanly to sympathize.

Anon shells are dropped by the French from the summits they have gained into the city below. A bomb from an Austrian battery falls near Napoleon, & in bursting raises a fountain of mud. The Emperor retreats with his officers to a less conspicuous position.

Meanwhile Lannes advances from a position near Napoleon till his columns reach the top of the Frauenberg hard by. The ~~two~~ united corps of Lannes & Ney ~~united~~ descend on the

inner slope of the heights towards the city walls in the rear of the retreating Austrians. One of the French columns scales a bastion, but Napoleon orders the assault to be discontinued, & with the wane of day the spectacle disappears.

Scene V.

The same. A chilly but rainless noon three days later. The townward side of the Michaelsberg.

At the back, northward, rise the Michaelsberg heights; below stretches the panorama of the city & the Danube. On a secondary eminence forming a spur of the upper hill, a fire of logs is burning, the foremost group beside it being Napoléon & his staff, the latter in gorgeous uniform, the former in a shabby grey greatcoat & slouched hat, walking to & fro with his hands behind him, & occasionally stopping to warm himself. The French infantry are drawn up in a dense array at the back of these.

The whole Austrian garrison of Ulm march out of the city gate opposite Napoléon. General Mack is at their head, followed by Guilay, Gottesheim, Klenau, Lichtenstein, & many other officers, who advance to Bonaparte & deliver their swords.

Mack.

Behold me, sire. Mack the unfortunate!

Napoléon.

War, General, ever has its ups & downs,
And you must take the better ~~with~~ and the worse,
As impish chance or destiny ordains.
Come near & warm you here. A glowing fire
Is life on these depressing, ~~dull wet~~ mixed, moist days
Of ~~rotting~~ smitten leaves ~~descending~~ down-dropping clammily,
And toadstools like the ~~so putrid~~ rotting lungs of men.
(To his lieutenants)
Cause them to stand to right & left of me.

The Austrian officers arrange themselves as directed, & the body of the Austrians now file past their conqueror, laying down their arms as they approach; some with angry gestures & words, others in moody silence.

Listen, I pray you, Generals gathered here.
I tell you frankly that I know not why
Your master wages this wild war with me.
I know not what he seeks by such injustice,
Unless to give me practice in my trade —
That of a soldier — whereto I was bred:

Deemed he my craft might ~~[illegible]~~ fade from me, unused?
Let him now own me still ~~no fool thereat~~ a dab therein!

Mack.

Permit me, your Imperial Majesty,
To speak one word in answer; which is this.
No war was wished for by my Emperor:
Russia compelled him to it!

Napoléon.

If that be,
You are no more a European power.—
I would point out to him that my resources
Are not confined to these my present musters;
My prisoners of war, in route for France,
Will see some marks of my resources there!
Two hundred thousand volunteers, right fit,
Will join my standards at a single nod,
And in six weeks prove soldiers to the bone.
Whilst your recruits, compulsion's scavengings,
Can scarce become sound warriors in long years.
But I want nothing on this Continent;
The English only are my enemies.
Ships, colonies, & commerce I desire,
Yea, therewith to advantage you as me.

Let me then charge your Emperor, my brother,
To turn his feet the shortest way to peace. —
All states must have an end, the weak, the strong;
Ay; even may fall the dynasty of Lorraine!

The filing past & laying down of arms by the Austrian army continues with monotonous regularity, as if it would never end.

Napoléon (in a murmur, after a while)

Well, what cares England! She has won her game;
I have unlearnt to threaten her from Boulogne:
~~'Tis~~ Her gold it is that forms the weft of this
Fair tapestry of armies marshalled here!
Likewise of Russia's, drawing steadily nigh.
But they may see what these see, by & by.

Spirit of the Years.

So let him speak, the while we clearly sight him
Moved like a figure on a lantern-slide,
Which, much amazing uninitiate eyes,
The all-compelling crystal pane but drags
Whither the showman wills.

Spirit Sinister

And yet, my friend,
The Will Itself might smile at this collapse

Of Austria's men-at-arms, so drolly done;
Even as, in your phantasmagoric show,
The deft manipulator of the slide
Might smile at his own art.

Chorus of the Years. (aerial music)
Ah, no: ah no!
It is impassible as glacial snow. –
Within the Great Unshaken
These painted shapes awaken
A lesser thrill than doth the ~~dropping rain~~ gentle lave
Of yonder bank by Donau's sliding wave
Within the Schwarzwald heights that give it flow!

Spirit of the Pities.
But O, the intolerable antilogy
Of making figments feel!

Spirit ~~Sinister~~ Ironic
Logic's in that.
IT does not, I must own, quite play the game.

Chorus of ~~Sinister~~ Ironic Spirits (aerial music)
And this day wins for Ulm a shady fame,
Which centuries shall not bleach from her old name!

The procession of Austrians continues till the scene is hidden by clouds –

J. Reid
? Dr Lanfare

Scene VI

London. A Sunday morning in the same late autumn. Before Lord Malmesbury's house in Spring Gardens. Idlers pause & gather in the background.

Pitt enters, ~~conversing with~~ and meets Lord Mulgrave.

Mulgrave.

Good day, Pitt. Ay, these leaves that skim the ground
With withered voices, hint that sunshine-time
Is well-nigh past. — And so the game's begun
Between him & the Austro-Russian force
As second movement in the faceabout
From Boulogne shore, with which he has hocussed us? —
What has been heard on't? Have they clashed as yet?

Pitt.

The Emperor Francis, partly at my instance,
Has given the chief command to General Mack,
A man most capable & far of sight.
He centres by the Danube-bank at Ulm,
A town well-walled, & firm for leaning on
To intercept the French in their advance

From the Black Forest towards the Russian troops
Approaching from the east. If Bonaparte
Sustain his marches at the break-neck speed
That all report, they must have met ere now.

Mulgrave.

You still have faith in Mack as strategist?
There have been doubts of his far-sightedness.

Pitt

I know, I know. — I am calling here at Malmesbury's
At this somewhat unceremonious time
To ask his help to translate this Dutch print
129 The post has brought. Malmesbury's a dab at Dutch,
K Learning it long at Leyden, years ago.

(He draws a newspaper from his pocket, unfolds it, & glances it down.)

There's news here unintelligible to me
Upon the very matter! You'll come in?

They call at Lord Malmesbury's. He meets them in the hall, & welcomes them with an apprehensive look of foreknowledge.

Pitt.

Pardon this early call. The packet's in,
And brings me this unreadable Dutch paper,

So, as the offices are closed to-day
I have walked round to you.
(Handing the paper)
What does it say?
For God's sake, read it out. You know the tongue.

Malmesbury (with hesitation.)

I have glanced it through already – more than once –
A copy having reached me, too, by now.......
We are in the presence of a great disaster!
See here. It says that Mack, encooped in Ulm
By Bonaparte – from four sides closing round –
Capitulated, & with all his force
Laid down his arms before his conqueror.

Pitt's ~~turns pale~~ face changes. A silence.

Mulgrave

Outrageous! Ignominy unparalleled!

Pitt.

By God, my lord, these statements must be false!
These foreign prints are trustless as Cheap Jack
Dumbfounding yokels at a country fair.
I heed no word of it. – ~~'Tis~~ Impossible.

What! Eighty thousand Austrians, nigh in touch
With Russia's levies that Kutúzof leads,
To lay down arms before the war's begun.
'Tis too much!

Malmesbury.

But I fear it is too true!
Note the assevered source of the report —
One beyond thought of coiners of mock tales.
The writer adds that military wits
Cry that the Little Corporal now makes war
In a new way, using his soldiers' legs
For victory, & not their bayonets.
Ha-ha. The joke must sting the Corporal's foes.

Pitt (after a pause.)

O vacillating Prussia! Had she moved,
Had she but planted one foot firmly down,
All this had been averted. — I must go.
'Tis sure, 'tis sure, I labour but in vain!

Malmesbury accompanies him to the door. & Pitt walks away disquietedly towards Whitehall, the other two regarding him as he goes.

Mulgrave

Too swiftly he declines to feebleness,

And these things well might shake a stouter frame!

Malmesbury.

Of late the burden of all Europe's cares,
The hire & oversight of half her troops,
His single pair of shoulders has upborne,
Thanks to the obstinacy of the King. —
His thin, strained face, his ready irritation,
Are ominous signs. He may not be for long.

Mulgrave.

He changes fast, indeed, — as do events.

Malmesbury.

His labour's lost; & all our money gone!
It looks as if this doughty coalition
On which we have lavished so much pay & pains
Would end in wreck.

Mulgrave.

All is not over yet;
The gathering Russian forces are unbroke.

Malmesbury.

Well; we shall see. Should Boney vanquish these,

And silence all resistance on that side,
His move will then be backward to Boulogne,
And so upon us.

Mulgrave

Nelson to the breach!

Malmesbury.

Ay; where is Nelson? Faith, by this late time
He may be sodden; churned in Biscay swirls;
Or blown to Polar bears by southwest gales;
Or sleeping amorously in some calm cave
On the Canaries' or Atlantis' shore
Upon the bosom of his Dido dear,
For all that we know! Never a sound of him
Since passing Portland one September day —
To make for Cadiz; so 'twas then believed.

Mulgrave.

He's staunch. He's watching, or I am much deceived.

Mulgrave departs. Malmesbury goes within. The Scene ends.

Act Fifth.

Scene I.

A bird's-eye view of the sea off Cape Trafalgar.

It is daybreak, & the broad face of the ocean is fringed on its eastern edge by the Cape & the Spanish shore. On the rolling surface immediately beneath the eye, ranged more or less in two parallel lines running north & south, one group of the train standing off somewhat, are the vessels of the combined French & Spanish navies, whose ~~sails~~ canvases, as the sun edges upward, shineth in its rays like satin.

On the Western horizon two columns of ships appear in full sail, small as moths to the aerial vision. They are bearing down towards the combined squadrons.

First Recording Angel (intoning from his book)

At last Villeneuve accepts the sea & fate,
Despite the Cadiz council called of late,
Whereat his stoutest captains — men the first
To do all mortals durst —

Willing to sail, & ~~sink~~ bleed & bear the worst,
Short of cold suicide, did yet opine
That plunging mid those teeth of treble line
In jaws of oaken wood
Held open by the English navarchy
With suasive breadth & artful modesty,
Would smack of purposeless foolhardihood.

Second Recording Angel.

But word came, writ in mandatory mood,
To put from Cadiz, gain Toulon, & straight
At a said sign on Italy operate.
Moreover that Villeneuve, arrived as planned,
Would find Rosily in supreme command. —
Gloomy Villeneuve grows rash, & darkly brave,
Leaps to meet war, storm, Nelson — even the grave.

Semichorus I of the Years. (aerial music)

Ere the concussion hurtle, draw abreast
Of the sea

~~J. McFarlane~~

J. Bermingham

Semichorus II

Where Nelson's hulls are rising from the west,
Silently.

Semichorus I.

Each linen wing outspread, each man & lad

Sworn to be

Semichorus II.

Amid the vanmost, or for Death, or glad
Victory!

The point of sight descends till it is near the deck of the Bucentaure, the flag-ship of Villeneuve. Present thereon are the Admiral, his flag-captain Majendie, Lieutenant Daudignon, other naval officers, & seamen.

Majendie.

All night we have read their signals in the air,
Whereby the peering frigates of their van
Have told them of our trend.

Villeneuve.

The enemy
Makes threat as though to throw him on our ~~rear~~ stern:
Signal the fleet to wear: bid Gravina
To come in from manoeuvring with his twelve,
And range himself in line.

(Officers murmur.)

I say again
Signal the fleet to wear! — & come upon

The larboard tack with every bow anorth! —
So, in the worst event, we make Cadiz
And patch our rags up there. As we head now
Our only practicable thoroughfare
Is through Gibraltar Strait — a fatal door!
Signal to close the line & leave no gaps.
Remember, too, what I have already told:
Remind them of it now. They must not pause
For signallings from me amid a strife
Whose chaos may prevent my clear discernment,
Or may forbid my signalling at all.
The voice of honour then becomes the chief's;
Listen they thereto, & set every stitch
To heave them on into the fiercest fight.
Now I will sum up all: heed well the charge:
Each captain, petty officer, & man
Is only at his post when under fire.

The ships of the whole fleet turn their bows from south to north as directed, & close up in two parallel curved ~~lines~~ columns, the concave side of each ~~line~~ column being towards the enemy, & the interspaces of the first ~~line~~ column being, in general, opposite the hulls of the second.

An officer (straining his eyes towards the English fleet.)
How they skip on! Their overcrowded sails

Bulge like the bladders in a tripe-man's shop
The market-morning after slaughter-day!

Petty Officer (aside)

It's morning before slaughter-day with us,
I make so bold to think!

The English admiral is seen to be signalling to his fleet. The signal is "England expects every man will do his duty." A loud cheering from all the English ships comes undulating on the wind when the signal is read.

Villeneuve

They are signalling too. — Well, business soon begins!
You will reserve your fire. And be it known
That we display no admiral's flags at all
Until the action's past. 'Twill puzzle them,
And be to our advantage when we close. —
Yes, they are ranked in ~~twos~~, I think, like us;
But we shall see anon.

Majendie.

The foremost one
Makes for the Santa Ana. In such case
The Fougueux might assist her.

Villeneuve

Be it so—
There's time enough.— Our ships will be in place,
And ready to speak back in iron words,
When theirs cry Hail! in the same sort of voice.

They prepare to receive the northernmost column of the enemy's ships headed by the Victory, trying the distance by an occasional single shot. During their suspense a discharge is heard south-ward, & turning they behold Collingwood at the head of his co-lumn in the Royal Sovereign, just engaging with the Spanish Santa Ana. Meanwhile the Victory, ~~with brazen effrontery,~~ (still) draws nearer, preserving ~~the~~ si-lence, with brazen effrontery. ~~[illegible]~~ At a concerted moment full broadsides are discharged into her simultaneously from the Bucentaure, the Santisima Trinidad, & the Redoutable.

When the smoke clears the Victory's mizzen-top mast, with spars & a quantity of rigging, is seen to have fallen, her wheel to be shot away & her deck encumbered with dead & wounded men.

Villeneuve

'Tis well! But see; their course is undelayed,
And still they near in clenched audacity!

Dandignon.

The northmost column bears upon our ship.
Their prows will pierce us beamwards. That's the aim.

Majendie.

Which aim brave Lucas o' the Redoutable
Most gallantly bestirs him to outscheme. —
See, how he strains, that on his timbers fall
Blows that were destined for ~~the~~ his Admiral!

During this the French ship Redoutable is moving forward to interpose itself between the approaching Victory & the Bucentaure.

Villeneuve.

Now comes it! The Santisima Trinidad,
The old Redoutable's hard sides, & ours,
Will take the weight of this bombastic blow.
Your grapnels & your boarding-hatchets — ready!
We throw our eagle on the English deck,
And swear to fetch it.

Crew.

Aye! We swear. Huzza!
Long live the Emperor!

A crash follows, the Victory having crossed the Bucentaure's ~~early~~ stern-waters, & discharged a broadside into her & the Redoutable endwise.

[White line] The point of view changes.

J. Bermingham
L. M Kenzie

Scene II.

The same. The Quarterdeck of the Victory.

The van of each division of the English fleet has drawn to the windward side of the combined fleets of the enemy, & broken their order, the Victory, the foremost of the weather column, swinging round parallel to & alongside the Redoutable, & the Téméraire taking up a station on the other side of that ship. The Bucentaure & the Santisima Trinidad become jammed together a little way ahead. A smoke & din of cannonading prevail, amid which the studding-sail booms are shot away.

Nelson, Hardy, Blackwood, Secretary Scott, Lieutenant Pascho, Burke the purser, Captain Adair of the Marines & other officers are on or near the quarterdeck.

Nelson.

See, now, that noble fellow Collingwood,
How straight he helms his ship into the fire! —
Now you'll haste back to yours (to Blackwood.) We must hence forth;
Trust to the Great Disposer of events,
And justice of our cause (to the truth of).

Blackwood leaves.

The battle grows hotter.
A double headed shot cuts down seven or eight marines on the Victory's poop.

Captain Adair, part those marines of yours,
And hasten to disperse them round the ships. —
Your place, ~~B~~ is down below, Burke, not up here;
Ah, yes; like David you would see the battle!

A heavy discharge of musket-shot comes from the tops of the Santisima Trinidad. Adair & Pascho fall. Another swathe of marines is mowed down by ~~a~~ chain-shot.

Scott.

My lord, I urge to you the utmost prayers
That I have liberty to shape in words:
Remove your stars & orders, I would beg;
That shot was aimed at you.

Nelson.

They were awarded to me as an honour,
And shall I do despite to those who prize me,
And slight their gifts? No, I will die with them,
If die I must.

He walks up & down with Hardy.

Hardy.

At least let's put you on
Your old great coat, my lord, ~~the air is keen~~ and cover them —;

The air ~~is~~ being keen — that while you still retain
Your dignities, you baulk these deadly aims.

Nelson.

Thank ~~ye~~ 'ee, good friend. But no, — I haven't time,
I do assure you — not a trice to spare,
As you well see.

A few minutes later Scott falls dead, a bullet having pierced his skull. Immediately after a shot passes between the Admiral & the Captain, tearing the instep of Hardy's shoe, & striking away the buckle. They shake off the dust & splinters scattered over them. Nelson glances ~~[illegible]~~ round, & perceives what has happened to his secretary.

Nelson.

~~[illegible]~~ Poor Scott, too, carried off! Warm work this, Hardy;
Too warm to go on long.

Hardy.

I think so, too;
Their lower ports are blocked against our hull,
And our charge now is less. Each shot so near
Sets their old wood on fire.

Nelson.

Ay, rotten as peat.

What's that? I think she has struck, or pretty nigh!

A cracking of musketry.

Hardy.

Not yet. — Those small-arm men there, in her tops,
Thin our crew fearfully. Now, too, our guns
Have to be dipped full down, or they would rake
The Téméraire there on the other side.

Nelson.

True. — While you deal good measure out to these
Keep slapping at those giants over ~~there~~ here —
The Trinidad, I mean, & the Bucentaure,
To win'ard — swelling up so pompously.

Hardy.

I'll see no slackness shall be shown that way.

They part & go in their respective directions. Gunners ~~Gunners stripped~~ naked to the waist, & reeking with sweat, are now in hot action on the several decks, & firemen carry buckets of water hither & thither, ~~throwing it against the Redoutable where hit, that she may not set both ships on fire~~. The killed & wounded thicken around, & are being lifted & examined by the surgeons. ——— [run on] ——— Nelson & Hardy meet again.

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Nelson.

Bid still the firemen bring more bucketfuls,
And dash the water into each new hole
That our shots make in the Redoutable,
Or we shall all be set ablaze together.

Hardy.

Let me once more advise, entreat, my lord,
That you do not expose yourself so clearly.
Those fellows in the maintop over there
Are peppering round you quite perceptibly.

Nelson.

Now, Hardy, don't offend me. They can't aim;
They only set their own rent sails on fire.—
But if they could I would not hide a button
To save ten lives like mine. I have no ~~great~~ cause
To prize it, I assure'ee.— Ah, look there,
145 One of the women hit,— & badly, too.
Poor wench! Let some one take her quickly down.

~~Hardy.~~

Hardy.

My lord, each common creature of the earth,
Dock-labourer, longshore-man, & waif, & stray
Sees it as policy to guard his life

For those dependent on him. Much more, then,
Should one upon whose priceless presence here
Such issues hang, so many ~~lives~~ strivers lean,
Use average circumspection at a time
So critical for us all.

Nelson.

Ay, ay. Yes; yes;
I know your meaning, Hardy; & I know
That you disguise as frigid policy
What really is your honest love of me.
But, faith, I have had my day. My work's nigh done;
I serve all interests best by chancing it
Here with the commonest. – Ah, their heavy guns
Are silenced every one! Thank God for that.

Hardy.

'Tis so. They only use their small arms now.

He goes to larboard to see what is progressing on that side between his ship & the Santísima Trinidad.

Officer (*to a seaman*)

Swab down these stains. The mess of blood upon'em
Makes'em so slippery that one's like to fall
In carrying the wounded men below.

L McKenzie

Maud

While Captain Hardy is ~~absent~~ still a little way off, Lord Nelson turns to walk aft, when a ball from one of the muskets in the mizzen-top of the Redoutable enters his left shoulder. He falls upon his face on the deck. Hardy looks round, & sees what has happened.

Hardy (hastily)

Ah – what I feared!

He goes towards Nelson, who in the mean time has been lifted by Serjeant-Major Secker & two seamen.

Nelson.

Hardy, I think they've done for me at last!

Hardy.

I hope not!

Nelson.

Yes. My backbone is shot through.
I have not long to live.

The men proceed to carry him below.

Those tiller ropes
They're shot away, get instantly repaired!

At sight of him borne along wounded there is great agitation among the crew.

Cover my face. There will no good be done
By drawing their attention off to me.
Bear me along good fellows; I am but one
Among the many darkened here to-day!

<u>He is carried on to the cockpit over the crowd of dead & wounded.</u>

(<u>To the Chaplain</u>)

Doctor, I'm gone. I am good for none but you.

<u>Hardy</u> (<u>remaining behind</u>.)

Hills, go to Collingwood & let him know
That we've no Admiral here.

(<u>He passes on</u>)

<u>A Lieutenant</u>.

Now quick & pick him off who did the deed —
~~I~~ That white bloused man ~~—~~ there in the mizzen-Top.

<u>Pollard</u>, a midshipman (<u>shooting</u>.)

No sooner said than done. A pretty aim!

<u>The Frenchman falls dead ~~into~~ upon the ~~top~~ poop</u>.

<u>The spectacle seems now to become enveloped in smoke,
& the point of view changes.</u>

Scene III.

The same. On board the Bucentaure.

The bowsprit of the French Admiral's ship is stuck fast in the stern-gallery of the Santisima Trinidad, the starboard side of the Bucentaure being shattered by shots from two English three-deckers which are ~~pressing~~ pounding her on that hand. The ~~stern~~ poop is also ~~much damaged~~ reduced to ruin by two other English ships that are attacking her from behind.

On the quarterdeck are Admiral Villeneuve, the flag-captain Majendie, Lieutenants Daudignon, Fournier, & others, anxiously occupied. The whole crew is in desperate action of battle.

Villeneuve.

We shall be crushed if matters go on thus.—
Direct the Trinidad to let her drive,
That this foul tangle may be loosened clear.

Daudignon.

It has been tried, sir; but she cannot move.

Villeneuve.

Then signal to the Hero that she strive
Once more to drop this way.

Majendie.

We may make signs,
But in the thickened air what signal's marked! —
'Tis done, however.

Villeneuve.

The Redoutable
And Victory there, — they grip in dying throes!
Something's amiss on board the English ships.
Surely the Admiral's fallen?

A Petty Officer

Sir, they say
That he was shot some hour, or half, ago.
With dandyism raised to godlike pitch
He stalked the deck in all his jewellery,
And so was hit.

Majendie.

Then Fortune turns her face!
We have slain England in dispatching him.
Yes! He commands no more; & Lucas, seeing,
Is taking steps to board. Look, spars are laid,
And his best men are mounting at his heels.

A crash is heard.

Villeneuve.

Ah, God — he is too late! Whence came that stroke
Of heavy grape? The smoke prevents my seeing
But at brief whiles. — The boarding band has fallen,
Fallen almost to a man! — 'Twas well assayed.

Majendie.

That's from their Téméraire, whose vicious broadside
Has cleared poor Lucas' decks.

Villeneuve

And Lucas, too.
I see him no more there. Now for ourselves!

Four of the English threedeckers have gradually closed round the Bucentaure, whose bowsprit still sticks fast in the gallery of the Santisima Trinidad. A broadside comes from one of the English, resulting in ~~worse~~ worse havoc on the Bucentaure. The main & mizzen masts of the latter fall, & the boats are beaten to pieces. A raking fire of musketry follows from the attacking ships, to which the Bucentaure heroically continues still to keep up a reply.

Captain Majendie falls wounded. His place is taken by Lieutenant Daudignon.

Villeneuve.

Now that the smoke has lessened, hoist the signals

Upon our only mast, & tell the van
At once to wear, & come into the fire.
(*Aside*) If it be true that, as *he* sneers, success
Demands of me but cool audacity,
To-day shall leave him nothing to desire!

Musketry continues. Daudignon falls. He is removed, his post being taken by Lieutenant Fournier. Another crash comes, & the deck is suddenly encumbered with rigging.

Fournier.

There goes our foremast! How for signalling now?

Villeneuve.

To try that longer, Fournier, is in vain
Upon this haggard, scorched, & ravaged hulk,
Her decks all reeking with such fearful sights,
~~And~~ Her starboard side in rents, & stern nigh gone!
How does she keep afloat? —
Bucentaure, O unlucky good old ship!
My part in thee is played. Ay — I must go;
I must tempt Fate elsewhere, — if but a boat
Can bear me through this wreckage to the van.

Fournier.

Our boats are stove in, or as full of holes

As the cook's skimmer, from their cursed balls!

<u>Musketry. Villeneuve's head- ~~[illegible]~~ of-staff, de Prigny, falls wounded, & many additional men. Villeneuve glances ~~afar anxiously~~ troublously from ship to ship of his fleet.</u>

<u>Villeneuve.</u>

How hideous are the waves, so pure this dawn—
Red-frothed; & friends & foes commixed therein!—
Can we in some way hail the Trinidad
And get a boat from her?

<u>They attempt to attract the attention of the Santisima Trinidad by shouting.</u>

Impossible:
As well try holloing to the antipodes!—
So here I am. The bliss of Nelson's end
Will not be mine: his full refulgent eve
Becomes my midnight! Well; the fleets shall see
That I can yield my cause with dignity.

<u>The Bucentaure strikes her flag.</u>

<u>A boat then puts off from the English ship Conqueror, & Villeneuve, having surrendered his sword, is taken out from the Bucentaure. But being unable to regain her own ship the boat is picked up by the Mars, & the French Admiral is received aboard her.</u>

<u>The point of view changes.</u>

Of Accd

~~Of Stenen~~

Scene IV.

The Same. The cockpit of the Victory.

A din of ~~battle~~ trampling & dragging overhead, which is accompanied by a continuous ground-bass roar from the guns of the warring fleets, culminating at times in loud concussions. The wounded are lying around in rows for treatment, some groaning, some silently dying, some dead. The gloomy atmosphere of the low-beamed deck is pervaded by a thick haze of smoke, powdered wood, & other dust, & is heavy with the fumes of gunpowder & candlegrease, the odour of drugs & cordials, & the smell from abdominal wounds.

Nelson, his face now pinched & wan with suffering, is lying undressed in a midshipman's berth, dimly lit by a lantern. Dr. Beatty, Dr Magrath, the Revd. Dr Scott the chaplain, Burke the purser, the steward, & a few others stand around.

Magrath (in a low voice)

Poor Ram, & poor Tom Whipple, have just gone.

Beatty

There was no hope for them.

Nelson (brokenly)

Who have just died?

Beatty

Two who were badly hit by now, my lord;
Lieutenant Ram & Mr Whipple.

Nelson

Ah! —
So many lives — in such a glorious cause . . . .
I join them soon, soon, soon! — O where is Hardy?
Will nobody bring Hardy to me — none?
He must be killed, too. Surely Hardy's dead?

A Midshipman.

He's coming soon, my lord. The constant call
On his full heed of this most mortal fight
Keeps him from hastening hither as he would.

Nelson.

I'll wait, I'll wait. I should have thought of it.

Presently Hardy comes down. Nelson & he grasp hands.

Hardy, how goes the day with us & England?

Hardy.

Well; very well, thank God for't, my dear ~~my~~ lord.
Villeneuve their admiral has this moment struck,
And put himself aboard the Conqueror.

Some ~~dozen or~~ fourteen of theirs, first-rates, or about,
Thus far we've got. The said Bucentaure chief:
The Santa Ana, the Redoutable,
The Fougueux, the Santisima Trinidad,
San Augustino, San Francisco, Aigle;—
And our old Swiftsure, too, we've grappled back,
To every seaman's joy.— But now their van
Has tacked to bear round on the Victory
And crush her by sheer weight of wood & brass:
Three of our best I am therefore calling up,
And make no doubt of ~~wasting~~ worsting theirs, & France.

Nelson.

That's well. I swore for twenty.— But it's well.

Hardy

We'll have 'em yet! But ~~without you~~, my lord,
~~We~~ have to make slow plodding do the deeds
That ~~shaped~~ sprung by inspiration ere you fell;
And on this ship the more particularly.

Nelson.

No, Hardy.— Ever 'twas your settled fault
So modestly to whittle down your worth.
But I saw stuff in you which admirals need
When, taking thought, I chose the Victory's keel
To do my business with these Frenchmen in.

A business finished now, for me! — Good friend,
Slow shades are creeping on me....... I scarce see you.

Hardy.

The smoke from ships upon our ~~weather~~ win'ard side,
And the dust raised by their wormeaten hulks,
When our balls touch 'em, blind the eyes, in truth.

Nelson.

No; it is not that dust; 'tis dust of death
That darkens me.

A crash overhead. Hardy goes up. One or two other officers go up, & by & by return.

What was that extra noise?

Officer.

The Formidable passed us by, my lord,
And thumped a stunning broadside into us.—
But, on their side, the Hero's captain's fallen;
The Algésiras has been boarded, too,
By Captain Tyler, & the captain shot:
Admiral Gravina desperately holds out;
They say he's lost an arm.

Nelson.

And we ourselves —
Who have we lost on board here? Nay, but tell me!

Beatty.

Besides poor Scott, my lord, & Charles Adair,
tr. (And Ram Lieutenant)*, Whipple captain's clerk,
There's Smith, & Palmer, midshipmen, just killed,
And fifty odd of seamen & marines.

Nelson.

Poor youngsters! Scarred old Nelson joins you soon.

Beatty.

And wounded: Bligh lieutenant; Pascho, too,
And Reeves, & Peake, lieutenants of marines,
And Rivers, ~~[illegible]~~ Westphall, Bulkeley, midshipmen,
With, of the crew, a hundred odd just now,
Unreckoning those late fallen not brought below.

Burke.

That fellow in the mizzen top, my lord,
Who made it his affair to wing you thus,
We took good care to settle; & he fell
Like an old rook, smack from his perch, stone dead.

Nelson.

'Twas not worth while! – He was, no doubt, a man
Who in simplicity & sheer good faith
Strove but to serve his country. Rest be to him!
And may his wife, his friends, his little ones,
If such he had, be tided through their loss,
And soothed amid the sorrow brought by me.

Hardy re-enters.

Who's that? Ah – here you come! How, Hardy, now?

Hardy.

The Spanish Admiral's rumoured to be wounded,
We know not with what truth. But, be as 'twill,
He sheers away with all he could call round,
And some few frigates, straight to Cadiz port.

Nelson.

Our course will be to anchor. Let them know.

Hardy.

But let me ask, my lord, as I needs must,
Seeing your state, & that your work's not done,
Shall I, from you, bid Admiral Collingwood
Take full on him the conduct of affairs?

Nelson (trying to raise himself)

Not while I live, I hope! No, Hardy; no.
Give Collingwood my order. Anchor all.

Hardy (hesitating)

You mean the signal's to be made forthwith?

Nelson.

I do! — By God, if but our carpenter
Could rig me up a jury-backbone now,
To last one hour — until the battle's done,
I'd see to it! But here I am — stove in —
Broken — all logged & done for! Done, ay done!

Beatty (returning from the other wounded)

My lord, I must implore you to lie calm!
You shorten what at best may not be long.

Nelson (exhausted)

I know, I know, good Beatty! Thank you well.
Hardy, I was impatient. Now I am still.
Sit here a moment, if you have time to spare?

Beatty & the others stand back, & the two abide in silence, except for the trampling overhead, Nelson apparently in less pain, & seeming to doze.

Nelson (suddenly)

What are you thinking, that you speak no word?

Hardy (waking from a short reverie)

Thoughts all confused, my lord:— their needs on deck,
Your own sad state, & your unrivalled past;
Mixed up with flashes of old things afar—
Old childish things at home, down Wessex way,
In the snug village under Blackdon Hill
Where I was born. The tumbling stream, the garden,
The placid look of the gray dial there,
Marking unconsciously this bloody hour.
And the red apples on my father's trees,
Just now full ripe.

Nelson.

Ay, thus do little things
Steal into my mind, too. But ah, my heart
Knows not your calm philosophy!— There's one—
Come nearer to me, Hardy:— one of all,
As you well know ~~read~~, pervades my memory now;
She, & my daughter— I speak freely to you.—
'Twas good I made that Codicil this morning
That you & Blackwood witnessed. Now she rests
Safe on the nation's honour ..... Let her have

My hair, & other little things I owned,
And take care of her, as you care for me.

(Hardy promises.)

Nelson (resuming in a murmur)
Does love die with our frame's decease, I wonder,
Or does it live on ever?.....

A silence. Beatty reapproaches.

Hardy.

Now I'll leave,
See if your order's gone, & then return.

Nelson (symptoms of death beginning to change his face.)
Yes, Hardy; yes; I know it. You must go.—
Here we shall meet no more; since Heaven forfend
That care for me should keep you idle now,
When all the ship demands you. Beatty, too,
Go to the others who lie bleeding there;
Them you can aid. To me you can give none!
My time here is the briefest.—If I live ~~but~~
But long enough I'll anchor..... But—too late!
My anchoring's elsewhere ordered... Kiss me, Hardy:

(Hardy bends over him.)

I'm satisfied. Thank God, I have done my duty!

Hardy brushes his eyes with his hand, & withdraws to go above, pausing to look back before he finally disappears.

Beatty (watching Nelson)

Ah. — Hush around! . . . . . .
He's sinking. It is but a trifle now
Of minutes with him. Stand you, please, aside,
And give him air.

A violent explosion is heard above the ~~tramp of feet~~ confused noises on deck. Nelson's eyes open widely, but he cannot speak. A ~~messenger~~ midshipman goes above & returns.

Midshipman ~~Messenger~~ (in an undertone)

It is the enemy's firstrate, the Achille,
Blown to a thousand atoms! — While on fire,
Before she burst, one of the women there,
~~Pulled off her clothes~~ Desperate for life, climbed from the gunroom port
Upon the rudder chains; pulled off her clothes,
And swam for the Pickle-schooner's boat. Our men,
Seeing her great breasts bulging on the brine,
Cried out, "A mermaid 'tis, by God!" — then rowed ~~leapt~~
And hauled her in. — ¶ Beatty. Such oddities intrude
On Death's grim hours! ¶ Midshipman. ~~Meantime~~ The Achille fought on,
Even while the ship was blazing, knowing well
The fire must reach their powder; which it did.

The spot is covered now with floating men.
Some whole, the main in parts; arms, legs, trunks, heads,
Bobbing with tons of timber on the waves,
And splinters looped with entrails of the crew.

Beatty, ~~Dr~~ the Chaplain, ~~Dr Scott~~, Magrath, the steward, & attendants stand watching Nelson. Beatty looks at his watch.

Beatty.

Two hours & fifty minutes since he fell,
And now he's going.

They wait. Nelson dies.

Let the Captain know,
Who will confer with Collingwood at once.
I must now turn to these.

He goes to another part of the cockpit, a midshipman ascends to the deck, & the scene darkens.

Chorus of the Pities (aerial music.)

His thread was cut too slowly! When he fell,
And bade his fame farewell,
He might have passed, & shunned his long-drawn pain,
Endured in vain, in vain!

Spirit of the Years.

Young Spirits, be not critical of That
Which was before, & shall be after you!

Spirit of the Pities.

But imbecile the Law & logicless
That quickens sense in shapes whom, thou hast said,
Necessitation ~~rules~~ sways! A life there was
Among these selfsame frail ones – Sophocles –
Who visioned it too clearly, even the while
He dubbed the Will "the gods". Truly, said he,
"Such gross injustice to their own creation
"Is their pronounced disgrace".× – Things mechanized
By coils & pivots set to foreframed codes
Would, in a thoroughsphered melodic rule,
And governance of sweet consistency,
Be cessed no pain, whose burnings would abide
With That Which holds responsibility,
Or inexist.

Chorus of the Pities (aerial music)

Yea, yea, yea!
Thus would the Mover pay
The score each puppet owes,
The Reaper reap what his contrivance sows!

× Soph. Trach. 1265

Why make men debtors when they did not buy?
Why wound so keenly Right that it would die?

Spirit of the Years.

Nay, blame not! For what judgment can ye blame? —
In that immense unweeting Mind is shown
One far above forethinking; purposive,
Yet superconscious; a Clairvoyancy
That knows not what It knows, yet works therewith. —
The consciousness ye mourn, Life's doom to feel,
If I report it rightly, came unsought,
Emerging by blind gropes from impercipience
By random sequence — luckless, tragic Chance,
If ye will call it so. 'Twas needed not
In the economy of Vitality,
Which might have ever kept a sealed cognition,
As doth the Will Itself.

Chorus of the Years. (aerial music)

Yea, yea, yea:
Your hasty judgments stay.
O heap not blame on that in-brooding Will;
O pause, till all things all their days fulfil!

Scene V.

London. The Guildhall.

A crowd of citizens has gathered outside to watch the carriages as they drive up & deposit guests invited to the Lord Mayor's banquet, for which event the Hall is brilliantly lit up within. A cheer rises when the equipage of any popular personage arrives at the door.

First Citizen.

Well, well! Nelson is the man who ought to have been banquetted to-night. But he is coming to Town in a coach different from these!

Second Citizen

Will they bring his poor splintered body home?

First Citizen

Yes. They say he's to be tombed in marble, at St. Pauls or Westminster. We shall see him if he lies in state. It will make a patriotic spectacle for a fine day.

Boy.

How can you see a dead man, father, after so long?

First Citizen

They'll embalm him, my boy.

Boy.

His lady will be handy for that, won't she?

First Citizen

Don't y' ask awkward questions.

Second Citizen.

Here's another coming!

First Citizen

That's my lord Chancellor Eldon. ~~What~~ Wot he'll say, & ~~what~~ wot he'll ~~[illegible]~~ look! – Mr. Pitt will be here soon.

Boy

I don't like Billy. He killed Uncle John's ~~[illegible]~~ parrot.

Second Citizen

How may y' make that out, youngster?

Boy.

Mr Pitt made the war, & the war made us want sailors; & Uncle John went for a walk down Wapping High Street to talk to the pretty ladies one evening; & there was a press all along the river that night – a regular hot one – & Uncle John was carried on board a man-of-war to fight under Nelson; & nobody minded Uncle John's parrot, & it talked itself to death. So Mr Pitt killed Uncle John's parrot; see, Sir?

Second Citizen

You had better have a care of this boy, friend. His brain is too precious for the common risks of Cheapside. Not but wot he might as well have said Boney killed the parrot when he was about it. And as for Nelson — who's now sailing shinier seas than ours, if they've rubbed Her off his slate ~~up above~~ where he's gone to — the French papers say that our loss in him is greater than our gain in ships; so that logically the victory is theirs. Gad, sir, it's almost true!

A hurrahing is heard from Cheapside, & the crowd in that direction begins to hustle & show excitement.

Second Citizen

He's coming, he's coming! Here, let me lift you up, boy. — Why, they have taken out the horses, as I am man alive!

First Citizen

Pitt for ever! — Why, here's a blade opening & shutting his mouth like the rest, but never a sound does he raise!

Third Citizen

I've not too much breath to carry me through my day's work, so I can't afford to waste it in such luxuries as crying Hurrah to aristocrats. If ~~ye~~ yeh was ten yards off ~~ye~~ y'd think I was shouting as loud as any.

Second Citizen

It's a very mean practice of yeh to husband yourself at such a time, & gape in dumbshow like a frog in Plaistow Marshes.

Third Citizen.

No, sir; it's economy; a very necessary instinct in these days of ghastly taxations, to pay half the armies in Europe! Really it is scarcely compass-mentass to do otherwise! Somebody must save something, for the country will be as bankrupt as Mr Pitt himself is, by all accounts; though he don't look it just now.

Pitt's coach passes, drawn by a troop of running men & boys. The Prime Minister is seen within, a thin, erect, up-nosed figure, with a flush of excitement on his usually pale face. The vehicle reaches the entrance to the Guildhall & halts with a jolt. Pitt gets out shakily, & amid cheers enters the building.

Fourth Citizen.

Quite a triumphal entry. Such is power;
Now worshipped, now accursed! The overthrow
Of all Pitt's European policy
When his hired army & his chosen general
Surrendered them at Ulm a month ago,
Is now forgotten! Ay; this Trafalgar
Will botch up many a ~~rg~~ ragged old repute,

Make Nelson figure as domestic saint
No less than country's saviour, Pitt exalt
As zenith-star of England's firmament,
And uncurse all the bogglers of her weal
At this adventurous time.

Third Citizen.

Talk of Pitt being ill! He looks hearty as a buck.

First Citizen

It's no news — no more. His spirits are up like a rocket for the time.

Boy.

Is it because Trafalgar is off Portingal that he loves Port-wine?

Second Citizen.

Ah, as I said, friend; this boy must go home & be carefully put to bed!

First Citizen.

Well, ~~whatever~~ wotever William's faults, it is a triumph for his virtues to-night!

Pitt having disappeared the Guildhall doors are closed, & the crowd slowly disperses, till in the course of an hour the street shows itself empty & dark, only a few oil lamps burning.

The Scene opens, revealing the interior of the Guildhall, & the brilliant assembly seated there, Mr Pitt occupying a seat of honour by the Lord Mayor. His health has been proposed, as that of the Saviour of ~~Europe~~ England, & drunk with acclamations.

Pitt (standing up after repeated calls.)

My lords & gentlemen: — You have toasted me
As one who has saved England & her cause.
I thank you, gentlemen, unfeignedly.
But — no man has saved England, let me say:
England has saved herself, by her exertions:
She will, I trust, save Europe by her example!

Loud applause, during which he sits down, rises, & sits down again. The scene then shuts, & the night without has place.

Spirit of the Years.

Those words of this man Pitt — his last large words,
As I may prophesy — that ring to-night
In their first mintage to the feasters here,
Will spread with ageing, lodge, & crystallize,
And stand embedded in the English tongue
Till it grow thin, outworn, & cease to be. —
So is't ordained by That Which all ordains;
For words were never winged with apter grace,
Or blent with happier choice of time & place,
To hold the imagination of this ~~island~~ sea-girt race.

9 McFarlane

9 Birmingham

Scene VI.*

A house in Rennes. Night. A sleeping-chamber. Two candles are burning near a bed in an alcove.

The French admiral Villeneuve, partly undressed, is pacing up & down the room.

Villeneuve.

These hauntings have at last nigh proved to me
That this thing must be done. O noble foe
And teacher, Nelson; blest & over blest
In thy outgoing at the noon of strife
When glory clasped thee round; while wayward Death
Refused my coaxings for the same-timed call!
Yet I did haunt where thickest missiles fell,
And both by precept & example showed
Where lay the line of duty, patriotism,
And honour, in that combat of despair.

He sees himself in the glass as he passes.

Unfortunate Villeneuve! — whom fate has marked

[foot note] * This Scene is a little advanced in time, to include it in the Act to which it essentially belongs.

To suffer for too firm a faithfulness.—
An Emperor's chide is a command to die.—
At first stern England's prisoner, then unloosed
Like some poor dolt unworth captivity,
Time serves thee now for ceasing. Why not cease?.....
We are as playing-cards an idiot king
Demands for pastime in his holiday.
Why is the world? Why man's strained sight thereof?
When, as Shades whisper in the midnight air,
Obvious expedience, greatness, charity,
Would argue, "Better no percipience here"!—
Far stranger than the strangest thing in being
Is it that things unbeing should ever be!

Spirit of the Years.

I'll speak. His mood is ripe for such a parle.

(Sending a voice into Villeneuve's ear)

Thou dost divine the hour!

Villeneuve

But those stern Nays,
That heretofore were audible to me
At each unhappy time I strove to pass?

Spirit of the Years.

Have been annulled. The Will grants exit freely;

Yea, It says "Now." Therefore make now thy time.

Spirit of the Pities.

May his sad being merge it into nought
Meekly & gently as a breeze at eve!

Villeneuve

From skies above me & the air around
Those breathings which so long have circled me
At last do whisper "Now." Now it shall be.

He takes a dagger from his accoutrements that are hanging alongside, &, lying down upon his back on the bed, stabs himself determinedly in many places, leaving the weapon in the last wound.

Ungrateful master; generous foes; Farewell!

Villeneuve dies; & the scene darkens.

Scene VII.

(Wateringplace, South) ~~King George's~~ Wessex. The interior of the "Old Rooms" Inn. Boatmen & burghers are sitting in settles round the fire, smoking & drinking.

First Burgher

So they've brought him home at last, hey? And he's to be ~~enjoy~~ (a roaring funeral?) (solemnized with)

First Boatman.

Ayes, thank God..... 'Tis better to lie dry than wet, if canst do it without stinking on the road gravewards. And they took care that he shouldn't.

Second Boatman.

'Tis to be at Paul's; so they say that know. And the crew of the Victory have to walk in front, & Cap'n Hardy is to carry his stars & garters on a great velvet pincushion.

First Burgher.

Where's the Captain now?

177/N [Second Boatman (nodding in the direction of Captain Hardy's house)

Down at home ~~to~~ here with his sisters for a bit. I saw him

a walking with them on the Esplanade yesterday. He looks ten years older than 'a did when 'a went. Ay – he brought the galliant hero home!

Second Burgher.

Now how did they bring him home so that he could lie in state afterwards to the naked eye?

First Boatman.

Well, as they always do, – in a cask of sperrits.

Second Burgher.

Really, now!

First Boatman. (lowering his voice)

But what happened was this. They were a long time coming, owing to contrary winds, & the Victory being little more than a wreck. And grog ran short, because they'd used near all they had, to peckle his body in. So – they broached the Adm'l.

Second Burgher.

How?

First Boatman.

Well; the ~~true~~ plain calendar o't is, that when ~~they~~ he came to be unhooped, it was found that the crew had drunk him dry. What was the men to do? Broke down by the battle, & hardly able to keep afloat, 'twas a most ~~natural~~ defendable thing, & it fairly

saved their lives. So he was their salvation after death as he had been in the fight. If he could have knowed it, 'twould have pleased him down to the ground! How 'a would have laughed through the ~~bung~~ spigot-hole: "Draw on, my hearties! Better I ~~dry~~ shrivel than you famish." Ha-ha!

Second Burgher.

It may be ~~natural~~ defendable afloat; but it seems queer ashore.

First Boatman.

Well, that's as I had it from one that knows — Bob Loveday of Overcombe — one of the Victory men that's going to walk in the funeral. However, let's touch a livelier ~~string~~. Peter Green, strike up that new ballet that they've lately had prented here, & were selling about town last market-day.

Second Boatman.

With all my heart. Though my wynd-pipe's a bit ~~dusty~~ clogged since the wars made beer so mortal small.

Song.

I.

In the wild October night-time, when the wind raved round the land,
And the Back-sea* met the Front-sea, & our doors were ~~heaped~~ blocked with sand,
And we heard the drub of Deadman's Bay, where bones of thousands are,
We knew not what the day had done for us at Trafalgar.

(All) Had done,
Had done,
For us at Trafalgar!

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* In those days the hind-part of this harbour was so called.

II.

"Pull hard, & make the Nothe, or down we go!" one says, says he.
We pulled; & bedtime brought the storm; but snug at home slept we.
Yet all the while our gallants after fighting through the day,
Were beating up & down the dark, sou'-west of Cadiz Bay.

(All.) The dark,
The dark,
Sou'-west of Cadiz Bay!

III.

The victors & the vanquished then the storm it tossed & tore,
As hard they strove, those worn-out men, upon that surly shore;
Dead Nelson & his half-dead crew, his foes from near & far,
Were rolled together on the deep that night at Trafalgar.

(All) The deep,
The deep,
That night at Trafalgar!

<u>The Cloud-curtain falls.</u>

<u>Chorus of the Years</u> (<u>aerial music</u>)

<u>Meanwhile the month moves on to counter-deeds</u>
<u>Vast as the vainest needs,</u>
<u>And fiercely the predestined plot proceeds!</u>

[illegible]

[illegible]

Act Sixth.

Scene I.

The Field of Austerlitz. The French Position.

The night of the first of December, & the eve of the battle.

The view is from the elevated position of the ~~French~~ Emperor's bivouac. The air is ~~[illegible]~~ keen & the sky clear, with stars, but the lower levels are covered with a white fog stretching like a sea, from which the heights protrude as dusky ~~islands~~ rocks.

To the left are discernible high & wooded hills. In the front mid-distance the plateau of Pratzen outstands, declining suddenly on the right to a low flat country covered with marshes & pools now mostly obscured. On the plateau itself are seen innumerable & varying lights, marking the bivouac of the centre divisions of the Austro-Russian army. Close to the foreground the fires of the French are burning, surrounded by soldiery. The presence of the countless ~~masses of~~ thousands of humanity that compose the two ~~vast~~ armies makes itself felt indefinably.

The tent of Napoléon rises nearest at hand, with ~~sent~~ sentinel & other military ~~shapes~~ figures looming around, & saddled horses held by at-

tendants. The accents of the Emperor are audible, through the canvas from inside, dictating a proclamation.

Voice of Napoléon.

"Soldiers, the hordes of Muscovy now face you,
"To mend the Austrian overthrow at Ulm!
"But how so? Are not these the selfsame bands
"You met & swept aside at Hollabrünn,
"And whose retreating forms, dismayed to flight,
"Your feet pursued along the trackways here?
"Our own position, strong & menacing,
"Is rich in chance for opportune attack;
"For, say they march to cross & turn our right —
"A course almost their need — their stretching flank
"Will offer us, from points now prearranged —"

Voice of a Marshal.

Shows it, your Majesty, the wariness
That marks your usual far-eyed policy,
To openly announce your tactics thus
Some twelve hours ere their ~~[illegible]~~ form can actualize?

Voice of Napoléon.

The zest such knowledge will impart to all
Is worth the risk of leakages. (To Secretary) Write on.

Dictation resumed.

"Soldiers, your columns I myself shall lead;
"But ease your minds who would expostulate
"Against ~~an~~ my undue rashness if your zeal
"Sow hot confusion in the hostile ranks
"As your old manner is, & in our strength
"We overwhelm & mingle with our foes.
"Nevertheless should issues stand at pause
"But for a moment, that time you will see
"Your Emperor the foremost in the shock,
"Taking his risk with every ranksman here.
"For victory, ~~my~~ men, must be no thing surmised
"As that which may or may not beam on us;
"Like noontide sunshine on a dubious & morn:
"It must be sure! — The honour & the fame
"Of France's gay & gallant infantry —
"So dear, so cherished all the Empire through —
"Binds us to compass it!
"Maintain the ranks;
"Let none be thinned by impulse or excuse
"Of bearing back the wounded; &, in fine,
"Be every one in this conviction ~~strong~~ ~~fixed~~ firm: —
"That 'tis our sacred bond to overthrow
"These hirelings of a country not their own:
"Yea, England's hirelings, they! — a realm ~~firm fixed~~ stiff steeled

"In deathless hatred of our land & hopes.
"The campaign closes with this victory;
"And we return to find our standards joined
"By vast new armies forming now in France.
"Forthwith, resistless, we establish Peace,
"Worthy of you, the nation, & of me.
"Napoléon."

(*To his marshals*)

So shall we prostrate these paid slaves of hers —
England's, I mean — the root of all the war.

Voice of Murat

The further details sent of Trafalgar
Are not assuring.

Voice of Lannes.

What may the details be?

Voice of Napoléon (*moodily*)

We learn that six-&-twenty ships of war
~~At Trafalgar~~ During the fight & after, struck their flags.
And that the tigerish gale throughout the night
Gave fearful finish to the English rage.
By luck their Nelson's gone, but gone withal
Are twenty thousand prisoners, taken off

To gnaw their fingernails in British hulks.
Of our vast squadrons of the summer-time
But rags & splintered remnants now remain. —
Thus has Villeneuve, poor craven, quitted him!
Thus are my projects for the navy damned,
And England puffed to yet more bombastry.
— Well, well; I can't be everywhere. No matter;
A victory's brewing here as counterpoise!
These water-rats may paddle in their slush
And welcome. 'Tis not long they'll have their way.
Ships can be wrecked by land!

Another voice.

And how by land,
Your Majesty, if one may query such?

Voice of Napoléon (sardonically)

I'll bid all states of Europe shut their ports
To England's arrogant bottoms, slowly starve
Her bloated revenues & monstrous trade,
Till all her hulks lie sodden in their docks,
And her grey island eyes in vain ~~await~~ shall seek
One jack of hers upon the ocean plains!

Voice of Soult.

A few more master-strokes, your Majesty,
Must be dealt hereabout to compass such!

Voice of Napoléon.

God, yes! — Even here Pitt's guineas are the foes:
'Tis all a duel 'twixt this Pitt & me;
And, more than Russia's host, & Austria's too,
I everywhere to-night around me ~~feel~~ scent
As from an unseen ~~presence~~ monster haunting nigh
His country's hostile breath! — But come: to choke it
By our to-morrow's feats, which now, in brief,
I recapitulate. — First Soult will move
To forward the grand project of the day:
To wit: ascend in echelon, right to front,
With Vandamme's men, & those of Saint Hilaire:
Legrand's division somewhere further back —
Nearly whereat I place my finger here —
To be there reinforced by tirailleurs,
Lannes to the left here, on the Olmütz road,
Supported by Murat's whole cavalry.
While in reserve, here, are the grenadiers
Of Oudinot, the corps of Bernadotte,
Rivaud, Drouet, & the Imperial Guard.

Marshal's voices

'Tis as we understood, sire, & have ordered.
Nought lags but day, to light our victory.

Voice of Napoléon.

Now let us up & ride the bivouacs round,

And note positions ere the soldiers sleep.
— Omit not from to-morrow's home dispatch
Direction that this blow of Trafalgar
Be hushed in all the news-sheets sold in France,
Or, if reported, let it be portrayed
As a rash fight whereout we came not worst,
But were so broken by the boisterous eve
That England claims it as her victory.

There emerge from the tent Napoléon & the Marshals, who all mount the horses that are led up, & proceed through the frost & rime towards the bivouacs. At the Emperor's approach to the nearest soldiery they spring up & shout his name, gather into wisps the straw, hay, & other litter on which they have been lying, & kindling these at the dying fires, wave them as torches. This is repeated as each fire is reached, till the whole French position is one wide illumination. The most enthusiastic of the soldiers follow the Emperor in a throng as he progresses, & his whereabouts in the vast field is denoted by their cries.

Chorus of the Pities. (aerial music)

Strange influence of personality!

Chorus of ~~Sinister~~ Ironic Spirits.

His projects they unknow, his grin unsee!

Chorus of the Pities.
Their loyal luckless hearts say blindly — He!

The night-shades ~~closed~~ close over.

Scene II.

The Same. The Russian position.

Midnight at the quarters of Field-marshal Prince Kutúzof at Kresnowitz. An inner apartment is discovered, roughly adapted as a council-room. On a table with candles is unfolded a large map of Austerlitz & its environs.

The Generals are assembled in consultation round the table, Weirother pointing to the map, Langeron, Buxhövden, & Milorádovich standing by, Dokhtorof bending over the map, Prschebiszewsky* indifferently walking up & down. Kutúzof, old & weary, with a scarred face & only one eye, is seated in a chair at the head of the table, nodding, waking, & nodding again. Some officers of lower grade are in the background, & horses in waiting are heard pawing & champing outside.

[foot-note] * I understand that this General's name should be pronounced ~~pro~~ three syllables, nearly Presh-ev'-sky.

Weirother (referring to memoranda, snuffing the nearest candle, & moving it from place to place on the map as he proceeds.)

Now here, on right, along the Olmütz Road
Will march & oust the French division there,
Dislodge them from the Sainton Hill, & thence
Advance direct to Brünn.—You heed me, sirs?—
The cavalry will occupy the plain:
Our centre & main strength,—you follow me?—
Count Langeron, Dokhtorof, with Prschebiszewsky,
And Kollowrath—now on the Pratzen heights—
Will down & cross the Goldbach rivulet,
Seize Tilnitz, Kobelnitz, & hamlets nigh,
Turn the French right, move onward in their rear,
Cross Schwarsa, hold the great Vienna road:—
So, with the nightfall, centre, right, & left,
Will rendezvous beneath the walls of Brünn.

Langeron (taking a pinch of snuff)
Good, General; very good!—if Bonaparte
Will kindly stand & let you have your way.
But what if he do not?—if he forestall
These sound slow movements, mount the Pratzen hills
When we descend, fall on our rear forthwith,
While we go crying for his rear in vain?

Kutúzof (waking up.)

Ay, ay. Weirother; that's the question—eh?

Weirother (impatiently)

If Bonaparte had meant to climb up there,
Being so spry & so determinate,
He would have set about it ere this eve!
He's not the ~~strength~~ troops to do so, sirs, I say.
His utmost strength is forty thousand men.

Langeron.

Then if so weak, how can so wise a brain
Court ruin by abiding calmly here
The onset of a force so large as ours?
He may be mounting up this very hour!
What think you General Milorádovich?

Milorádovich

I? What's the use of thinking, when to-morrow
Will tell us, with no need to think at all!

Weirother.

Pah! At this moment he retires apace.
His fires are dark; all sounds have ceased that way
Save voice of owl or mongrel wintering there.
But, were he right, these movements I detail
Would knock the bottom from his enterprize.

Kutúzof (rising.)

Well, well. Now this being ordered, set it going.
One here shall make fair copies of the notes.
And send them round. Colonel von Toll, I ask
To translate part. — Generals, it grows full late,
And half-a-dozen hours of needed sleep
Will aid us more than maps. We now disperse,
And luck attend us all. Good night. Good night.

The Generals & other officers go out severally.

Such plans are — paper! Only to-morrow's light
Reveals the true manoeuvre to my sight!

He flaps out with his hand all the candles but one or two, slowly walks outside the house, & listens. On the high ground in the direction of the French lines are heard shouts, & a wide illumination grows & strengthens; but the hollows are still mantled in fog.

Are these the signs of regiments out of heart,
And beating backward from an enemy!

He ponders.

On the Pratzen heights immediately in front there begins a movement among the Russians, signifying that the plan which involves desertion of that vantage-ground is about to

be put in force. Noises of drunken singing arise from the Russian lines at various points elsewhere.

Kutúzof re-enters his quarters with a face of misgiving.

The night shades ~~enclose~~ obscure the spot. ⁂

Scene III

The Same. The French position.

Shortly before dawn on the morning of the second of December. A white frost & fog still prevail in the low-lying areas; but overhead the sky is clear. A dead silence reigns.

Napoléon, on a gray horse, ~~closely~~ attended by Berthier, ~~&~~ & surrounded by Marshals Soult, Lannes, Murat & their aides-de-camp, all cloaked, is discernible in the gloom riding down from the high ground before Bellowitz, on which they have bivouacked, to the village of Puntowitz on the Goldbach stream, quite near the front of the Russian position of the day before on

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foot-note

⁂ In attempting to ~~depicting~~ depict this scene, so necessary as a contrast to the night-scene on the French side, the writer, like others, has followed without question the MS. of Langeron quoted by M. Thiers. But it is probable that the soundness of the Count's own opinion in the consultation was somewhat strengthened on paper at the expense of that of his companions.

the Pratzen. The Emperor & his companions come to a pause, look around & upward to the hills, & listen.

Napoléon.

Their bivouac fires, that lit yon top last night,
Are all extinct.

Lannes.

And hark you, sire: I catch
A sound which, if I err not, means the thing
We have hoped, & hoping, feared fate would not yield!

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Napoléon.

My God, it surely is the tramp of horse
And jolt of cannon downward from the hill
Towards our right here, by the swampy lakes
That face Davoust! Thus, as I sketched, they work!

Murat.

Yes! They already move upon Tilnitz.

Napoléon.

Leave them alone! Nor stick nor stone we'll stir
To interrupt them. Nought that we can scheme
Will help us like their own stark sightlessness! —
Let them get down to those white lowlands there.

And so far plunge amid them that no skill,
When sudden vision flashes on their fault,
Can help them, though despair-stung, to regain
The key to mastery held at yester-eve!
    Meantime move onward these divisions here
Under the fog's kind shroud; descend the slope,
And cross the stream below the Russian lines:
There halt concealed, till I send down the word.

<u>Napoléon & his staff retire to the hill southeast of Bellowitz as the day dawns pallidly.</u>

'Tis good to get above that rimy cloak
And into cleaner air. It chilled me through.

<u>When they reach the summit they are over the fog; & suddenly the sun breaks forth radiantly to the left of the Pratzen upland, illuminating the sallow face of Napoléon & the faces of those around him. All eyes are turned first to the sun, & thence to look for the dense masses of men that had occupied the Pratzen the night before. ~~The upland is practically deserted~~</u>.

<u>Murat</u>.

I see them not. The ~~plateau~~ upland seems deserted!

<u>Napoléon</u> (exultantly)

Gone; verily! — Ah, how much will you give,

An hour hence, for the coign abandoned now!
The battle's ours. — It was, then, their rash march
Downwards to Tilnitz & the Goldbach swamps
Before dawn, that we heard. — No hurry, Lannes!
Enjoy this sun, that thrusts its bristling awns
Across the lowlands' fleecy counterpane,
And peers beneath our broadest hatbrim's shade .....
Soult, how long hence to win the Pratzen top?

Soult

Some twenty minutes or less, your Majesty:
The troops down there, still mantled by the mist,
Are half upon the way.

Napoléon.

Good! Set forthwith
Vandamme & Saint Hilaire to mount the slopes —

Firing begins in the marsh to the right by Tilnitz & the pools, though the thick air yet hides the operations. ~~there~~.

O, there you are, blind boozy Buxhöwden!
Achieve your worst. Davoust will hold you firm.

The head of an aide-de-camp rises through the fog on that side, & he hastens up to Napoléon & his companions, to whom

the officer announces what has happened. Davoust rides off, disappearing legs first into the white stratum that covers the attack.

Lannes & Murat, you have concern enough
Here on the left, with Prince Bagration
And all the Austro-Russian cavalry.
Haste off. The victory promising to-day
Will, like a thunder-clap, conclude the war!

The Marshals with their aides gallop off towards their respective divisions. Soon the two divisions under Soult are seen ascending in close column the inclines of the Pratzen height. Thereupon the heads of the Russian centre columns disclose themselves, breaking the sky line of the summit from the other side, in a desperate attempt to regain the position vacated by the Russian left. A fierce struggle developes there between Soult's divisions & these, who, despite their tardy attempt to recover the lost vantage-ground, are pressed by the French off the slopes into the lowland.

Semichorus I of the Pities. (aerial music)
O Great Necessitator, heed us now!
If it indeed must be
That this day Austria ~~reek~~ smoke with slaughtery,
Quicken the issue as Thou best know'st how;

And dull to suffering those whom it befalls
To quit their lodgment in a flesh that galls.

Semichorus II.

If it be in the future human story
To lift this man to yet intenser glory,
Let the exploit be done
With the least sting, or none,
To those, his kind, at whose expense such rise be won!

Spirit of the Years.

Again ye deprecate the World-Soul's way
That I so oft have told? Then note anew
(Since ye forget) the ordered potencies,
Nerves, sinews, trajects, eddies, ducts of It
The Eternal Urger, pressing change on change.

At once a preternatural clearness possesses the atmosphere of the battlefield, in which the scene becomes anatomized & the living masses of humanity transparent. The controlling, immanent Will appears therein, as before, like a network of currents, threads, & ejections, twitching, interpenetrating, entangling, & thrusting hither & thither the human forms.

L McKenzie
I McFarlane

Semichorus I of Ironic Spirits (aerial music)

O Innocents, can ye forget
That things for aye were shaped & set
Ere mortals ~~on~~ and this planet met?

Semichorus II.

Stand ye apostrophizing That
Which, ~~shaping~~ working all, ~~things~~ ~~but~~ works but thereat
Like some sublime fermenting-vat

Semichorus I.

That heaves throughout its vast content
With strenuously transmutive bent
Though of its aim unsentient?—

Semichorus II.

Could ye have seen Its early deeds
Ye would not cry, as one who pleads
For quarter, when a Europe bleeds!

Semichorus I.

Ere ye, young Pities, had upgrown
From out the deeps where mortals moan
Against a ruling not their own,

Semichorus II.

He of the Years beheld, & we,
Creation's prentice artistry
Express in forms that now unbe

Semichorus I.

Tentative dreams from day to day;
Mangle its types, re-knead the clay
In some more palpitating way;

Semichorus II.

Beheld the rarest wrecked amain,
Whole nigh-perfected species slain
By those that scarce could boast a brain;

Semichorus I.

Saw ravage, growth, diminish, add,
Or peoples sane or peoples mad,
In choiceless rote of good & bad;

Semichorus II.

Heard laughters at the ruthless dooms
Which tortured to the eternal glooms
Quick, quivering hearts in hecatombs.

Chorus of Ironic Spirits.

Us Ancients, then, it ill befits
To quake when Slaughter's spectre flits
Athwart this field of Austerlitz!

Spirit of the ~~Years~~ Earth.

Pain not their young compassions by such lore,
But ~~silence keep~~ hold your peace, & read the battle yonder:
The moment marks the day's catastrophe.

Scene IV.

The Same. The Russian position.

It is about noon, & the vital spectacle is now near the village of Tilnitz. The fog has dispersed, & the sun shines clearly, though without warmth, the ice on the pools gleaming under its radiance.

General Buxhövden & his aides-de-camp have reined up, & remain at pause on a hillock. The General watches through a glass his battalions, ~~who~~ which are still disputing the village. Suddenly approach down the track from the upland of Pratzen large companies of Russian infantry helter-skelter. Count Langeron is beheld to be retreating with them; & soon, ~~with~~

~~&~~ pale & agitated, ~~countenance~~ he hastens up to General Buxhövden, whose face is flushed.

Langeron.

While they're upon us you stay idle here!
Prschebiszewsky's column is distraught & rent,
And more than half my own made captive! Yea,
Kreznówitz carried, & Sokólnitz hemmed,
The enemy's whole strength will greet you soon!

Buxhövden.

You seem to see the enemy everywhere.

Langeron.

You cannot see them, be they here or no!

Buxhövden.

I only wait Prschebiszewsky's ~~coming~~ nearing corps
To join Dokhtórof's to them. Here they come.

Soult, supported by Bernadotte & Oudinot, having cleared & secured the Pratzen height, his battalions are perceived descending from it on this side, behind Dokhtórof's division, & so placing the latter between ~~theirs~~ themselves & the pools.

Langeron.

You cannot tell the Frenchmen from ourselves!
These are the victors. — Ah — Dokhtórof — lost!

Dokhtórof's troops are seen to be ~~&~~ retreating towards the water.

Buxhövden

Dokhtórof tell to save him as he may!
We, Count, must gather up our shaken men
And hurry by the road through Austerlitz.

Buxhövden's regiments & the remains of Langeron's are rallied & collected, & they retreat by way of the hamlet of Aujezd. As they go over the summit of a hill Buxhövden looks back. Langeron's columns, which ~~was~~ were behind his own, have been cut off by Vandamme's division coming down from the Pratzen upland. This & some detachments from Dokhtórof's column rush towards one of the lakes & endeavour to cross it on the ice. It cracks beneath their weight. At the same moment Napoleon & his staff appear on the top of the Pratzen.

The Emperor watches the scene with a ~~grim~~ vulpine smile; & directs a battery near at hand to fire down upon the ice on which the Russians are crossing. A ghastly crash & splashing follows the discharge, the shining surface breaking into pieces like a mirror, which fly in all directions. Two thousand fugitives are engulfed, & their ~~[illegible]~~ shrieks & groans reach

the ears of the watchers like ironical huzzas.

A general flight of the Russian army from wing to wing is now disclosed, involving in its current the Emperor Alexander & the Emperor Francis, with the reserve, who are seen towards Austerlitz endeavouring to rally their troops in vain; & they are swept along by the disordered soldiery.

J. McFarlane Trench

Scene V.

Near the Windmill of Paleny, ~~three~~ about seven miles from Austerlitz, between the French advanced posts & the Austrians.

A bivouac fire is burning. Napoléon, in gray overcoat & beaver hat turned up front & back, rides ~~up~~ to the spot with Berthier, Savary, & his aides, & alights. He walks ~~up~~ to & fro ~~with arms folded~~ complacently, meditating or talking to Berthier. Two groups of officers, one from each army, stand in the background on their respective sides.

Napoléon.

What's this of Alexander? Weep, did he,
Like his old namesake but for meaner cause?
Ha, ha!

Berthier

'Tis told, your Majesty, that Colonel Toll,

One of Field-Marshal Prince Kutúzof's staff,
In the retreating moil of overthrow,
Found Alexander seated on a stone
Beneath a leafless roadside appletree,
Out here by Göding on the Holitsch way;
His coal-black uniform & snowy plume
Unmarked, his face disconsolate, his grey eyes
Mourning in tears the fate of his brave troops –
All flying southward, save the steadfast slain.

Napoléon.

Poor devil! – But he'll soon get over it –
Sooner than his employers oversea! –
Ha! – this will make friend Pitt & England writhe,
And cloud somewhat their lustrous Trafalgar.

An open carriage approaches from the direction of Holitsch, accompanied by a small escort of Hungarian guards. Napoléon walks forward to meet it as it draws up, & welcomes the Austrian Emperor, who alights. He is wearing a gray cloak over a white uniform, carries a light walking-cane, & is attended by Prince John of Lichtenstein, Swartzenberg, & others. His usually fresh-coloured face is thin & anxious.

They formally embrace. Berthier, Prince John, & the rest retire, & the two Emperors are left by themselves before the fire.

Napoléon.

Here on the roofless ground do I receive you —
My only mansion for these two months past.

Francis.

Your tenancy thereof has brought such fame
That it must needs be one which charms you, Sire.

Napoléon.

Good! Now this war. It has been forced on me
Just at a crisis most inopportune,
When all my energies & arms were bent
On teaching England that her watery walls
Are no defence against the ~~arms~~ wrath of France
Aroused by breach of solemn covenants.

Francis.

I had no zeal for violating peace
Till ominous events in Italy
Revealed the gloomy truth that France aspired
To conquest there & undue sovereignty.
Since when mine eyes have seen no sign outheld
To signify a change of purposings.

Napoléon.

Yet there were terms distinctly specified

To General Giulay in November past,
Whereon I'd gladly fling the sword aside.
To wit: in order that hot jealousy
Stir us no more anent transalpine rule,
I'd take the Isonzo river as our bounds.

Francis.

Roundly, that I cede all. – And how may stand
Your views as to the Russian forces here?

Napoléon.

You have all to lose by that alliance, Sire.
Leave Russia. Let the Emperor Alexander
Make his own terms; whereof the first must be
That he retire from Austrian territory.
I'll grant an armistice therefor. Anon
I'll treat with him to ~~shape~~ weld a lasting peace,
Based on some simple understandings; chief,
That Russian armies keep to Russian soil,
And that, moreover, every English keel
Be locked from out the ports of his domain.
Meanwhile to you I'll tender this good word:
Keep Austria to herself. To Russia bound,
You pay your own costs with your provinces,
And therewithal pay Alexander's too.

Francis.

I see as much, & long have seen it, sire;
And standing here the vanquished, let me own
What happier issues might have left unsaid:
Long, long I have lost the wish to bind myself
To Russia's purposings & Russia's risks;
Little do I count these alliances
With Powers that have no substance seizable!

As they converse they walk away.

An Austrian Officer.

O strangest scene of an eventful life,
This junction that I witness here to-day!
An Emperor — in whose majestic veins
Æneas and the proud Caesarian line
Claim yet to live; & those scarce less renowned,
The dauntless Hawks'-Hold Counts, of gallantry
So great in fame one thousand years ago —
To bend with deference & manners mild
In talk with this adventuring campaigner,
Raised but by pikes above the common herd!

Another Austrian Officer

Ay! There be Satschan swamps & Pratzen heights
In royal lines, as here at Austerlitz.

The Emperors again draw near.

I and

I [illegible]

Francis.

Then, to this armistice, which shall be called
Immediately, at all points, I agree;
And pledge my word that my august ally
Accept it likewise, & withdraw his force
By daily measured march to his own realm.

Napoléon.

For him I take your word. And pray believe
That rank ambitions are your own, not mine;
That though I have postured as your enemy,
And likewise Alexander's, we are one
In interests, have in all things common cause.
One country sows these mischiefs Europe through
By her insidious chink of luring ore—
False-featured England, who, to aggrandize
Her name, her influence, & her revenues,
Schemes to impropriate the whole world's trade,
And starves & bleeds the folk of other lands.
Her rock-rimmed situation walls her off,
Like a slim selfish mollusk in its shell,
From the wide views & fair fraternities
Which on the mainland we reciprocate,
And spurs her search for profit in our woes.

Francis.

I am not competent, your Majesty,
To estimate that country's conscience now,
Nor to engage on my ally's behalf
That English ships be shut from Russian trade.
But I rejoice me that in all things else
My promise can be made; & that this day
Our conference ends in friendships & esteem.

Napoléon.

I will send Savary to-morrow's dawn
And make all lucid to the Emperor.
For us, I wholly can avow as mine
The cordial spirit of your Majesty.

They retire towards the carriage of Francis. Berthier, Savary, Lichtenstein, & the suite of officers advance from the background, & with mutual gestures of courtesy & amicable leavetakings the two Emperors' party company.

Chorus of the Pities (aerial music)

Each for himself, his family, his heirs;
For the wan weltering nations who concerns, who cares?

Chorus of Ironic Spirits.

A pertinent query, in truth! —
But spoil not ~~good~~ the sport by your ruth:
'Tis enough to make half
Yonder zodiac laugh
When ~~monarchs~~ rulers begin to allude
To their lack of ambition,
And strong opposition
To all but the general good!

Spirit of the Years.

Hush levities. Events press on. Turn west.

The curtain of cloud draws slowly across. ~~the scene~~.

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Scene VI.

Shockerwick House, near Bath. The interior of the Picture Gallery.

Enter Wiltshire, the owner, & Pitt, who looks emaciated & walks feebly.

Wiltshire (pointing to a portrait.)

Now here you have the lady we discussed:
A fine example of his manner, sir?

Pitt.

It is a fine example, sir, indeed, —
With that transparency amid the shades,
And those thin blue-green-grayish leafages
Behind the pillar in the background there,
Which seem the leaves themselves. — Ah, this is Quin.

Wiltshire

Yes; Quin. A man of varied parts, though rough
And choleric at times. Yet, at his best,
As Falstaff, never matched, they say. But I
Had not the fate to see him in the flesh.

Pitt.

Churchill well carves him in his "Characters":—
"His eyes, in gloomy socket taught to roll,
"Proclaimed the sullen habit of his soul.
"In fancied scenes, as in Life's real plan,
"He could not for a moment sink the man:
"Nature, in spite of all his skill, crept in;
"Horatio, Dorax, Falstaff—still 'twas Quin".—
He was at Bath when Gainsborough settled there
In that house in the Circus which we know.—
I like the portrait much.—The brilliancy
Of Gainsborough lies in this his double sway:
Sovereign of landscape he; of portraiture
Joint monarch with Sir Joshua.—Ah?—that's—hark!
Is that the patter of a horse's hoofs
Along the road?

Wiltshire

I notice nothing, sir.

Pitt.

It is a gallop, growing quite distinct.
And—can it be a messenger for me!

Wiltshire.

I hope no awkward European news
To stop the honour of this visit, sir!

They listen. The gallop of the horse grows louder, & is checked at the door of the house. There is a hasty knocking, & a courier, splashed with mud from hard riding, is shown into the gallery. He presents a dispatch to Pitt, who sits down & hurriedly opens it.

Pitt (to himself)

O heavy news indeed! .... Disastrous; dire!

He appears overcome as he sits, & covers his forehead with his hand.

Wiltshire.

I trust you are not ill, sir?

Pitt.

Could I have
A little brandy, sir, quick brought to me?

Wiltshire.

In one brief minute.

Brandy is brought in, & Pitt takes it.

Pitt.

Now leave me, please, alone. I'll call anon.
Is there a map of Europe handy here?

Wiltshire fetches a map from the library, & spreads it before

<u>the minister. Wiltshire, Courier, & servant go out.</u>

O God that I should live to see this day!

<u>He remains awhile in a profound reverie; then resumes the reading of the dispatch.</u>

"Defeated – the Allies – quite overthrown
At Austerlitz – last week." – Where's Austerlitz?
– But what avails it where the place is now;
What corpse is curious on the longitude
And situation of his cemetery!.....
The Austrians and the Russians overcome,
That vast adventuring army is set free
To bend unhindered strength against our shores.....
So do my plans through all these weary years
Announce them ~~made~~ built in vain!....
His heel on Europe, monarchies in chains
To France, I am as though I had not been.

<u>He gloomily ponders the dispatch & the map some minutes longer. At last he rises with difficulty, & rings the bell.</u>

<u>A servant enters.</u>

Call up my carriage, ~~[illegible]~~ please you, now at once;
And tell your master I return to Bath

This moment. — I may want a little help
In getting to the door here.

Servant.

Sir, I will,
And summon you my master instantly.

He goes out & re-enters with Wiltshire. Pitt is assisted from the room.

Pitt.

Roll up that map. 'Twill not be needed now
These ten years. Realms, laws, peoples, dynasties,
Are churning to a pulp within the maw
Of empire-making Lust & personal Gain!

Exeunt Pitt, Wiltshire, & servants; & in a few minutes the carriage is heard driving off, & the scene closes.

Scene VII.

Paris. A Street leading to the Tuileries.

It is night, & the dim oil lamps reveal a vast concourse of citizens of both sexes around the Palace-gates & in the neighbouring thoroughfares.

Spirit of the Years (to the Spirit Ironic)
Thou may'st descend & join this crowd awhile,
And speak what things shall come into thy mouth.

Spirit Sinister.
I'll harken! I would'nt miss it for the groans of another Austerlitz!

The Spirit Ironic enters on the scene in the disguise of a young foreigner.

Spirit Ironic (to a Streetwoman)
Lady, a late hour this to be afoot!

Woman
But ~~[illegible]~~ such is due from gallant dames like me,
For now he comes! — after a three months' whirl
Of victories won on fields whose homely names
Had never touched the ears of mortal men

Beyond the haunts of neighbour peasantry;
But gilded now by deeds of deathless dye
Grow commonplaces on remotest tongues!

Spirit ~~Ironic~~.

~~Good.~~ Rare! To it again. I could give ~~ear~~ heed all night.

Woman.

Poor profit, then, to me from my true trade,
Wherein hot competition is so rife
Already, since these victories brought to town
So many foreign jobbers in ~~[illegible]~~ my line
That I'd best hold my tongue from praise of fame!
However, one is caught by popular zeal,
And though five midnights have not brought a sou,
I too chant *Jubilate* like the rest. —
In courtesies have haughty monarchs vied
Towards their conqueror! who, with men-at-arms
One quarter theirs, has vanquished by his nerve
Vast marshallings four hundred thousand strong,
And given new tactics to the art of war
Unparalleled in Europe's history!

Spirit. ~~Ironic~~

What man is this, whose deeds thou blazon'st so —
Who makes the earth to tremble, shakes old thrones,

And turns the plains to wilderness?

Woman.

Dost ask
As ignorant, yet asking can define?
What mean you, traveller?

Spirit ~~Ironic~~.

I am a stranger here,
A wandering wight, whose life has not been spent
This side the globe, though I can speak the tongue.

Woman.

Your air has truth in't; but your state is strange!
Had I a husband he should tackle thee.

Spirit ~~Ironic~~

~~Fifty~~ Scores thou hast had – ~~ten times~~ a hundred more than she
In the olden tale, if now thou hast not one!

Woman.

Wilt take the situation from this hour?

Spirit ~~Ironic~~

Thou know'st not what thy frailty asks, good dame!

Woman.

Well, learn in small the Emperor's chronicle.

As gleaned from what my soldier-husbands say:—
Some five-&-forty standards of his foes
Are brought to Paris, borne triumphantly
In proud procession through the surging streets,
Ever as brands of fame to shine aloft
In dim-lit senate-halls & city aisles.

Spirit. ~~Ironic~~

Fair Munich sparkled with festivity
As there he tarried somewhat, & was met
By the gay Joséphine your Empress here.—
There, too, Eugene—

Woman.

Napoleon's step-son he—

Spirit.

Received for gift the hand of that Princess
Augusta (daughter of Bavaria's king,
Who plighted once her troth to Baden's heir)
And, to complete his honouring, was hailed
Successor to the throne of Italy.

Woman.

How know you, ere this news has got abroad?

Spirit.

Channels (I have) the common people lack.—

There, on the nonce, the forenamed Baden prince
Was joined to Stephanie Beauharnais, ~~she~~ her
Who stands as daughter to the man we wait,
Some say as more.

Woman.

They do? Then such not I.
Do revolution's dregs so soil thy mind
That thou should'st doubt the eldest son thereof?
'Tis dangerous to insinuate nowadays!

Spirit.

Good! Lady many-spoused, more charity
Upbrims in thee than in some loftier ones
Who would not name thee with their whitewashed tongues. —
~~But peace~~ Enough. I am one who, didst thou know my name,
Thou would'st not grudge a claim to speak his mind.

Woman.

A thousand pardons, sir.

Spirit

Resume thy tale

If so thou wishest.

Woman.

Nay, but you know best —

Spirit

How laurelled progress through applauding crowds

Have marked his journey home. How Strasburg town,
Stuttgart, Carlsruhe, acclaimed him like the rest:
How pageantry would here have welcomed him,
Had not his speed outstript intelligence.
— Now will a glimpse of him repay thee. Hark!

Shouts arise & increase in the distance announcing Bonaparte's approach.

Well, Buonaparté has revived by land,
But not by sea. On that weird element
Never will he incorporate his dream,
And float as master!

Woman.

What shall hinder him?

Spirit.

That which has ~~hitherto~~ heretofore England, so to speak.

Woman.

But she's in straits. She's lost her Nelson now,
(A worthy man: he loved a woman well!)
George drools & babbles in a darkened room;
Her heaven-born minister declines apace;
All smooths the Emperor's way.

Spirit.

Tales have two sides,
Sweet lady. Vamped up news may reach thee here. –
That Austerlitz was lustrous none denies,
But would it shock thy garrulousness to know
That the true measure of this Trafalgar –
Utter defeat, ay, France's naval death –
Your Emperor bade be hid?

Woman.

The seer's gift
Has never plenteously endowed me, sir,
As in appearance you. But to plain eyes
Things ~~shape~~ seem as stated.

Spirit.

We'll let seemings be. –
But know, these English take to liquid life
Right patly – nursed therefor in infancy
By rimes & rains which creep into their blood,
Till like seeks like. The sea is their dry land,
And, as on cobbles you, they wayfare there.

Woman.

Heaven prosper, then, their watery wayfarings

(The Imperial carriage ~~nears~~ appears)

If they'll leave us the land! — } The Emperor! —
Long live the Emperor! — He's the best by land.

Bonaparte's carriage ~~appears~~ arrives, without an escort. The lamps shine in, & reveal the Empress Joséphine seated beside him. The plaudits of the people grow boisterous as they hail him Victor of Austerlitz, & the more active run after the carriage, which turns in from the Rue St. Honoré to the Carrousel, & thence vanishes into the Court of the Tuileries.

Woman.

May all success attend his next exploit!

Spirit.

To wit: to put the knife in England's trade,
And teach her treaty-manners — if he can!

Woman.

I like not your queer knowledge, creepy man.
There's weirdness in your air. I'd call you ghost
Had not the Goddess Reason laid all such
Past Mother Church's cunning to restore.
— Adieu. I'll not be yours to-night. I'd starve first!

She withdraws. The Crowd wastes away, & the Ironic Spirit vanishes.

Scene VIII.

Putney. Bowling-green House. ~~A~~ Pitt's bedchamber, from the ~~...~~ ~~anteroom~~ landing without. It is afternoon. At the back of the room as seen through the doorway is a curtained bed beside which a woman sits, the Lady Hester Stanhope. Bending over a table at the front of the room is Sir Walter Farquhar the physician. Parslow the footman & another servant are near the door.

Tomline Bishop of Lincoln enters.

Farquhar (in a subdued voice)

I grieve to call your lordship up again,
But symptoms lately have disclosed themselves
That mean the knell to the frail life in him.
And whatsoever things of gravity
It may be needful to communicate,
Let them be spoken now. Time may not serve
If they be much delayed.

Tomline.

Ah, stands it thus?...
The name of his disease is — Austerlitz!

His brow's inscription has been Austerlitz
From that dire morning in the month just past
When ~~winds~~ tongues of rumour ~~breathed~~ twanged the word across
From its ~~unthought of~~ hid nook on the Moravian plains.

Farquhar.

And yet he might have borne it, had the weight
Of governmental shackles been unclasped,
Even partly, from his limbs last ~~summertime~~ Lammastide,
When that despairing journey to the King
At Gloucester Lodge by Wessex shore was made
To beg such. But relief the King refused.
"Why want you Fox? What—Grenville & his friends?"
He harped. "You are sufficient without these—
"Rather than Fox, why, give me civil war!"
And metal that would rather break than bend
Held out no longer. Now the ~~outcome~~ upshot nears.

Lady Hester Stanhope turns her head & comes forward.

Lady Hester.

I am grateful you are here again, good friend!
He's sleeping at this moment; but once more
Has asked for tidings of Lord Harrowby,
And murmured of his mission to Berlin.

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As Europe's forlorn hope: if, sure, it be
That any hope remain!

Maid
Of Stower

Tomline.

There's no news yet.—
These several days while I have been sitting by him
He has inquired the quarter of the wind,
And asked me to observe the ~~[deleted]~~ stable cock.
When I said "East," he answered "That is well!—
"Those are the breezes that will speed him home!"
So clings his heart about his country's weal.

Farquhar.

I fear that Wellesley's visit here by now
Gave him too long a strain. He quite broke down,
And has fast weakened since.

Lady Hester.

Ah—now he wakes.
Please come & speak to him as you would wish.
(To Tomline)

225 Lady Hester, Tomline, & Farquhar retire behind the bed, where in a short time voices are heard in prayer. Afterwards the Bishop goes to a writing-table, & Lady Hester comes forward again. ~~The door is softly opened~~ Steps are heard on the stairs, & Pitt's friend Rose,

the President of the Board of Trade, appears on the landing & makes inquiries.

~~Br Cart~~

Lady Hester (whispering)

He leaves the settlement of his affairs
To his old friend the Bishop: & his words
Bespeak too much anxiety for me,
And under-rate his services so far
That he has doubts if his past deeds deserve
Sufficient recognition by the State
To warrant trifling pensions to his kin.
He had been fain to write down his intents,
But the quill dropped from ~~at~~ his ~~[illegible]~~ unmuscled hand.—
Now his friend Tomline pens what he dictates
As to the items of his last desires.

Rose & Lady Hester turn ~~[illegible]~~. They see the Bishop bending over the bed with ~~the~~ a sheet of paper on which he ~~had~~ has previously been writing. A little later he dips a quill & holds it within the bed-curtain, spreading the paper beneath. A thin white hand emerges from behind the curtain & signs the paper. The Bishop beckons forward the two servants, who also sign.

Farquhar on one side of the bed, & Tomline on the other, are spoken to by the dying man. The Bishop afterwards withdraws from the bed & comes forward.

Tomline.

A list of his directions has been drawn,
And feeling somewhat more at mental ease
He asks Sir Walter how long he's to live.
Farquhar just answered, in a soothing tone,
There was a faint hope of recovery.
At this my dear friend smiled & shook his head,
As if to say: "I can translate your words,
But I reproach not friendship's lullabies".

Rose.

Rest he required; & rest was not for him.

Farquhar comes forward as they wait.

Farquhar.

His strain of concentration on these things,
Determined now, that long have worried him,
Have left him in a numbing lethargy,
From which I fear he may not rouse to strength
For speech with us again.

Rose

But hark. He does.

They listen.

Pitt.

My country! How I leave my country!.....

Tomline.

Ah, — Immense the matter those poor words contain!

Rose.

Still does his soul stay wrestling with that theme,
And still it will, even semi-consciously,
Until the drama's done.

They continue to converse in whispers. Pitt sinks ~~again~~ slowly into a stupor, from which he never ~~recovers~~ awakens.

Spirit of the Pities (to the Spirit of the Years)

Do you intend to speak to him ere death?

Spirit of the Years.

Nay, I have spoke too often! Time on time,
When all Earth's light has lain on the nether side,
And yapping midnight winds have leapt on roofs,
And raised for him an evil masquerade
Of national disasters, row on row,
That tortured him with harrowing grimace,
Have I communed with that intelligence.
Now I would leave him to pass out in peace
And seek the silence unperturbedly.

Spirit Sinister.

Even Its official Spirit can show ruth
At man's fag end, when his destruction's sure!

Spirit of the Years.

It suits us ill to cavil each with each.
I might retort. I only say to thee
Its slaves we are: Its slaves we aye must be.

Chorus of Intelligences (aerial music)

Yea, out of space we draw, like these,
And tarry till That please
To null us by Whose stress we emanate. –
Our incorporeal sense,
Our overseeings, our superior state,
Our readings why & whence,
Are but the flower of Man's intelligence:
And that but ~~the~~ an unreckoned incident
Of the ~~[illegible]~~ all-urging Will, blindly ~~multi~~ magni-potent.

A curtain of cloud descends.

End of the First Part of The Dynasts.